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What I tell my junior
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What I Tell My Junior Congregation

A Series of Object Sermons Preached to the Junior Congregation of Summit Presbyterian Church, Germantown, Pa., by the Pastor

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With an Introduction by

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PHILADELPHIA
THE WESTMINSTER PRESS
1913

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PREFACE

This little manual of methods and material for work with children in the services of the church, is the result of several years of actual experience with just such conditions as are mentioned herein, and the sermons are the result of an attempt to meet the child's needs in the morning service of the church. The plans advocated have been tried and approved, either by the author or by an expert in this form of work. For many years these ideas relative to the child at church have been forming themselves in the author's mind and heart, as he has dealt with children in Christian Endeavor work, Sunday school, and church services. The appended sermonettes are for the most part original, and are an attempt to meet the needs of pastors who have either no time or no aptitude for such sermonic composition.

As a further reason for the publication of this little book let me say, that in the perusal of many books of sermons adapted to children, I find that there are few published upon this side of the water. It is with a desire to add to the American literature

of the "Children's Church," and with a still greater desire to see the inauguration of a "Children's Church" in every Congregation of Christians, that I commit this work to the hands of my brethren in the ministry.

R. P. D. B.

Germantown, Pa., March, 1912.

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INTRODUCTION

Securing the attendance of the children at the church services is a subject that is frequently discussed nowadays.

When we had the old "family pew," and the family occupying it every Sunday morning, there was no question of the presence of the children. With the changing conditions of church life and church services, however, the children have become more conspicuous by their absence than by their attendance.

Various plans have been proposed for bringing the boys and girls to the preaching services. One of these plans is known as "The Junior Congregation." The youth of the congregation, under the ages of ten or twelve years, are formed into a congregation that is expected to attend the Sunday morning service.

After the offering has been made, the pastor preaches a brief sermon to the boys and girls, who are seated, so far as possible, in the front pews. Upon the conclusion of this sermon, a hymn is sung; and during the singing any of the children

who desire to leave the church, or to sit with their parents, are at liberty to do so.

This plan has been in operation several years in Summit Presbyterian Church, Germantown, Pa. The sermons found in this volume were preached to the children at these services. It was my privilege to hear a number of them, and I can bear testimony to the fact that they were of interest to the adults as well as to the children. On more than one occasion it seemed to me that if the lessons contained in these children's sermons were just the lessons the fathers and mothers needed to learn.

Pastors who are preaching to the children will find this book suggestive and helpful. It would be a good plan for parents to get it and read a chapter to their children on Sunday afternoon.

ALEXANDER HENRY.

THE MOTIVE

The Junior Congregation is not a plan upon paper. Its substance is not akin to the roseate hues of an evanescent dawn. It is not the child of a preacher's holiday dreams. It is the real thing. It has been put to the test of time, of criticism, of monotonous methods and poor preaching and has come out pure gold. It meets a need. It gets the child. It saves the church.

The Junior Congregation is not a Christian Endeavor Society. It is the church of Christ in junior form. It is the church of Christ in the lives of boys and girls. Its object is not to help the church, its object is to be the church. It is an attempt on the part of the church to realize in the lives of the boys and girls the fact of their union with the visible church in baptism. It is not seeking to train children to work in the church when they are grown, but to work in the church now.

Its chief purpose is to draw the minds of the children to the thought that above and beyond all outside associations and societies, the chief organ of the Saviour for the propagation of his kingdom in the world is the church.

The name of this new organization in the history of Christian progress which is meeting the

real need in the church life of to-day, came from the First Reformed Church of Brooklyn, being given by the pastor, Rev. J. M. Farrar, D.D., whose great heart and great physique as well have ever been given to the children of his church.

In that church for many years there has been the Organized Junior Congregation, the first to be so organized in this country, or for all the author knows in any other.

There is a powerful motive behind this particular branch of church activity. First.—There is the poor training manifested in the members of the church to-day. What pastor is not burdened with the consciousness of insufficiency in the great majority of his church members? And in seeking the reason for this deficiency may we not lawfully say that it is largely due, among other things, to the lateness of the hour of life at which they began to realize their responsibilities to the real work of the church; and to the want of knowledge as to the methods employed in the various branches of the work of the church?

I must confess that it was some time after my union with the church that I came to know the workings of those great boards of the church, through whose instrumentality the real work of the church is done. We begin in the primary schools of our land to-day to teach the babes the methods of our civil government. Then why should we tarry till these impressible years are

gone to tell the child the methods of his Master's kingdom, and to accustom him to the weekly routine of church going and church working?

Second.—There is a reason in the lack of a proper valuation placed by the present generation upon the office of the Christian church. "Can't I be a Christian without joining the church?" How many times in a month do we pastors get heartsick over the sentiment embodied in these words? And do we not know the sorrow of having a large meeting of Christian Endeavorers file out from the lecture room and go home while the empty seats at the after evening service of the church call to them in vain? It is because there are so many excellent organizations that are paralleling the life and work of the church, that the Junior Congregation has become a necessity. Is it not true that doing the work of these organizations, which are of course a part of the church life, the young people feel it entirely unnecessary to enter into the real fellowship of the church?

The sacraments are not valued as they once were. And we often have the saddening spectacle of pastors stuffing the mail boxes with pleading circular letters, almost beseeching the Christians to come to the table of their Lord.

And when it comes to the matter of benevolences, it is not at all a difficult matter to conceal from our left hand what our right hand doeth. When out of a membership of three hundred about fifty per

cent contribute regularly to the church support; and when out of a like membership only forty units contribute to the boards of the church with any regularity or system, is there not motive enough for the careful and systematic indoctrination of the children of the church in the matter of their stewardship to God ?

The whole attitude of men and women to the church as a means of grace is that of growing indifference. There are few "Sons of the Tabernacle" to-day as compared with the days of your boyhood. The attractive power of the church as a center toward which Christians naturally gravitate is so much less in these days of numerous societies and cults as to make the cultivation of church life a feature in the religious training of our boys and girls. To be able to present to the coming generation a company of young men and women who can honestly say "I must be in my Father's house and about my Father's business" and who would rather be doorkeepers in the church of God than Past Grand Exalted Rulers of the finest organization of men ever got together, will be a service that will amply repay all the energy the pastors of the present-day church can expend. There is a body of men and women in our churches who have been aptly dubbed "The Outer Church." They are the church that surrounds the true church. They are attendants at her services, they are contributors to her needs,

they are interested in her temporal progress. But there the interest stops. They care not for her sacraments. They will not join the inner circle of her life. They will not share her responsibilities.

A member of my congregation who had run the gamut of churches from Friends' Meeting to High Church Episcopacy, when asked why he did not unite with the church he was now attending, replied, "I have been to all of them, can agree with none of them, and so I now sit on the fence and watch them all pass by." Bear witness with me, angels of the churches, that you deal with many such.

Sitting outside your church proper you know you have a miserable lot of Noah's carpenters, who help to drive the financial nails to hold your work together, but who, like Noah's carpenters, will not come into the ark after they have helped to build it.

It is in the field of this outer church that I can glean sufficient motive for the establishment of a Junior Congregation, which shall teach the children of our churches that there is more in our church duties, than "sitting on the fence" and seeing the thing go round. It is the unfortunate lack of personal responsibility to all the services and sacraments of the church, on the part of the members of it that is responsible for what Dr. W. J. Dawson calls "The Arrest of Christianity."

Third.—Then there is the object lesson to be seen in many churches of the conspicuousness of the children emphasized by their absence. "Are the children of professing Christians," asks Dr. J. M. Farrar, "familiar with any door of the church save the one into the Sunday-school room?" For every five adults there should be at least one child in the church. But in how many churches is this ratio maintained?

So greatly has their absence from the services of the church become a matter of course, that it is not uncommon to hear it said of a church that has a large attendance of the boys and girls—"Why, how many children you have in your congregation!"

There is a fearful fallacy deep-rooted in the minds of many parents, that a child should never be urged to go to church, for fear that in after years he may acquire a distaste for church worship.

This makes the pastor's problem a harder one and his responsibility more keen. He must attract where parents refuse to compel.

Here then is another reason for the Junior Congregation. "Back to the church" must be the cry for children's work in these days, and the Junior Congregation brings the children back.

Fourth.—There is the incentive brought by the hopefulness of childhood. Bishop Brooks used to say "He who helps a child, helps humanity with a distinctness and an immediate-

ness that no other help given at any other time can supply."

There is no age so rich in treasures to the future of Christ's kingdom as that of childhood. And this is the children's age. The norm of human life in the olden days used to be the man. To-day the norm of life is the child. In no age has it been so true that "the child is father of the man."

The sad fact, however, is that while the world of science and education has realized this, the church of Christ has not, except perhaps in the realm of the Sunday school.

The church is following rather than leading in the great work of the age for children.

There are to-day children's playgrounds for which, as in Philadelphia recently, a whole city is laid under tribute. There are children's libraries in connection with every city library of any size in this country. There are even, as in one or two cities, children's theaters, where strictly juvenile plays are put upon the boards. But it is only within the last few years that we have had a children's church.

The plea has been in many cases that we have no room for them. It has for ages been the cry of society. There was no room for the little newcomer in the inn at Bethlehem. At a summer hotel a little fellow was ordered off the piazza with the remark that "this piazza is for grown people." The little fellow looked longingly at the broad

veranda with its inviting coolness and smoothness and said wistfully, "But hasn't it got any little boy end?"

It is a sad state of affairs when a church has no "little boy end," or corner.

Better knock out a partition or two and make room for the hopefuls. Dr. Stephen H. Tyng of St. George's Church, New York City, once said, "When a choice must be made between the adult and the child, I make it in favor of the child."

For the child is the church of the future. The general secretary of the Industrial Christian Alliance of New York writes: "From my point of view, engaged in rescue work, I believe the preventive work of a Junior Congregation, in efficiently training the children in the development of character will materially reduce the number of men in such institutions as ours. I would like to know how the church may be made to understand this."

The hopefulness of the child as a candidate for membership in the church of Christ ought to stimulate every pastor to give more time to the training of the children along the line of Christian duty and church work. For we know that the little ones slip into the fellowship of the church most naturally and simply when they are drawn toward it by wise and loving methods. They come to realize discipleship so easily that he has lost the golden moment who neglects gently to

urge them to it. It is quite possible as we know from actual experience to have the little ones come to the pastor and eagerly ask, " When can I join the church ?"

Fellowship in the church as a rule is never brought before the child mind with any degree of definiteness. It is a matter that is shunted off by parent and teacher to that vague and unreal day "when you get old enough." The child heart is a reverent heart, by nature, and if irreverence be the bane of modern church worship, then where would it be better to begin the training in that quality which is so sadly lacking, than in the Junior Congregation? The hopefulness of the child as an instrument in soul-saving is not recognized by the church as it should be.

One child church member conscientiously living out its Christian life in a home will often be worth a hundred sermons and innumerable pastoral visits. There are many avenues to the human heart, but often all are closed save those through which a little child can find its way. And those who resist the teaching of logical sermons have been led to Christ by the influence of some child Christian.

E. P. Hammond, and other workers with the child heart, have many touching tales to tell of the power of a Christian child. The following is one:

One Sabbath evening the father of two little girls who had united with the church, had placed one of them upon each knee, to ask them what they had

heard at church that morning. He was not a professing Christian. Looking full into the father's face, the elder said, "Jesus must have loved us very much to do that; don't you love him for it, father?" They then went on to tell of the trials and sufferings of Christ, and she asked again the question—"Don't you love him for that, father?" And when they had spoken of the death on the cross, the little one asked for a third time, "Now don't you love him, father?"

The father had to put the children down and go out of the room to hide his emotions. He afterwards confessed that he felt worse under the artless questioning of the little ones than under any sermon he ever had heard. He afterwards joined the church.

The hopefulness of children as church members lies, too, in their simple and unequivocal faith. Did you ever make the experiment of going down the aisle of a children's meeting and questioning the little ones as to their discipleship? If so, you have been pleased with the certainty and immediateness of their replies. "Are you a Christian?" "No." "Are you a Christian?" "Yes." There is no hesitation.

The loyalty and affection of a child for the church of which it is a member is a further incentive for the gathering them into such sympathy with the church, that they will eventually unite with its communion.

THE MISSION

The mission of the Junior Congregation is of course the supplying of the deficiency in church methods, and the lack in church life that gives rise to these motives mentioned in the previous chapter.

It is therefore not a substitute for any other organization of the church's life, nor is it intended to interfere with any of those most estimable societies for the training of young hearts along the line of Christian work. Its mission is apart from these. They parallel the life of the church and its worship; the Junior Congregation is an integral part of the church and its worship. While its methods follow closely, of necessity, those of Christian Endeavor societies and mission bands, it is not intended to be merged into the Christian Endeavor movement.

The one works for the church. The other is the church at work. The distinction may be more fancied than real, yet if the intent of the Junior Congregation movement be carried out, the children will be conscious of a part in the church life which Christian Endeavor, no matter how excellent, cannot supply. The Junior Endeavorer looks forward to a day when he shall become a part of the body of the church. The junior member of

the congregation is already a part of the body of the church.

It is to teach the child that as a baptized member of the visible church of Christ he has a real place in its worship, its government and its life. The mission of the Junior Congregation is also to foster a love for church going, and for the house of God.

Many a distracted parent has said to me: "I do so dislike to force my children to go to church, and yet what am I to do? I fail to get them interested." I think I know why. A back seat where the little head can scarcely lift itself over the pew in front, with such a sea of bonnets in his line of vision that he cannot see the preacher. A long formal service followed by a sermon in which there is never a reference to the child nor an illustration he can grasp. A glance occasionally from the paternal relatives' corner that freezes the blood, whenever tired nerves rebel and little feet shuffle and kick the pew in front.

How many of you preachers and teachers who read these lines, ever really "loved" the house of God under such conditions? How many of you would have given the contents of your boyish pockets at that moment, no matter how full of boyhood's treasures, to be free? Be honest and confess it. And yet strange as it may seem to you, I have heard of children who eagerly asked permission to attend divine worship, and who,

meeting the preacher on the way, have stopped him to ask him, "What's it goin' to be about today?" But these children were members of a Junior Congregation.

There is a mission which this organization holds in training the young mind to listen to preaching. I can blame no one for not being attentive to that which is unintelligible. I recently listened for five minutes to a lecture on Christian Science; then I spent the remainder of the half hour counting the pattern squares in the ceiling.

By training the young mind to listen to a logically thought-out sermon with its heads and subheads, its firstlies and secondlies and even the deadly thirdly, but couched in such language, and illustrated in such form that it fixed the attention while it instructed and filled the mind; and then getting the child to write out an analysis of the same to be brought in the following Sabbath, you give the child a taste for sermon processes, and a knowledge of how to hear and digest the truth that will stay by him forever. And then it is their sermon. Not for a moment does it belong to mother or father, although I have learned that both mother and father are children after all and love best the thoughts that are preached to the child. Because it is theirs they love it, and with a child's loyalty deem it the best sermon the pastor preaches.

There is a very definite need of teaching the

young to hear preaching. The excellent methods of Christian Endeavor have been rather toward practice than precept, and have given the pendulum a swing toward doing rather than doctrine. This is not by any means a wholesome attitude, for it is carried to such excesses that the young people after singing and reading verses in the lecture room pass out in large numbers to their homes, neglecting the church service where the truth is preached. The very natural result is that the real deep truths of the gospel, which they have not been able to think out for themselves, they have not acquired. And as a consequence the Christian life and the church life become shallow, emotional, and without a solid foundation.

Then the Junior Congregation has a mission in the creation of a love in the heart of the child for church work. We know the tendency in child training to lead a child to its life's work through the medium of play. One of the most precious of books to me as a child was a volume highly illustrated, and entitled "Playing Trades." We are all conscious of the value of this method. For to everyone the work that becomes play is the better done. Playing at church work, is a part of the Junior idea. And who does not know the joy that comes to a child who is conscious that he is a part of a great undertaking, and is contributing to its success, not from the outside as an onlooker,

but from the inside as a partaker. On one of the Sound steamers a little fellow running about on the upper deck had laid hold of the great tiller that is carried attached to the rudderhead for use in steering in an emergency. And as the great helm moved to and fro it carried the little chap with it. In the greatest glee he cried out to his mother—"See, see, mother, I'm steering the boat." To give the Junior even a hold on the inner workings of the church, is to inspire in him somewhat of the same zeal.

I can well recall the feeling of pride that came to me in those blissful circus days of boyhood, to feel that I was a part of the "Greatest Show on Earth" because I was allowed to carry water for the elephants.

For the members of the Junior Congregation, to take up the offering of their own little band on a Sabbath morning before the great church service, to usher to their seats the newcomers among the boys and girls, to hold their business and devotional meetings and elect officers just such as are elected at the annual business meetings of the church, is a sufficient incentive to secure their interest in the church and its life for years to come.

And in addition to all this the great missionary interests of the church are to be helped. There is of course a most useful and systematic training in missions of the boys and girls in the Endeavor societies and mission bands, but there is a sad

lack of loyalty in many of them to the great channels of missionary work and life—the great boards of the churches. More and more must we emphasize the necessity of the support of these regularly appointed channels through whose most efficient agency the gifts of the churches are passed on to the fields where the work is being done. It is true of the denomination to which the writer belongs that no other religious denomination is so eclectic in its method of giving as we, for every charitable institution has a claim upon our gifts while often the great boards must report serious indebtedness. To train the children that the gifts they make should go through the regularly appointed channels, is to breed a loyalty to their church and is to protect in a most necessary manner the authority and usefulness of the agencies of the churches. This I believe the Junior Congregation will do.

Thus the mission of the Junior church might be enlarged indefinitely as the needs of the church present themselves, for whatever the duties of the church member are to be, they can best be instilled within him when he is a child.

THE METHOD

As to the methods of dealing with such a Junior Congregation as has been briefly described above, we might for convenience divide our work into two general parts. You will be concerned primarily with your youthful congregation in the services of the church, especially in the morning service. And you will be engaged from time to time with them in a more informal and more intimate relation in their little meetings, as a body by themselves.

In the morning service of the church you will have the greatest opportunity, for you will stand before them as you stand before their elders as the prophet of God with a message for the child heart from the Master. It will be the severest testing you will have the whole week. It will also be the most blessed ten minutes in all your seven days.

For methods I care little. You will exercise your own judgment in the method of getting the message into the child. But if experience of others will help you, you will have the children seated before you in the first rows of pews. If there are not pews enough to accommodate the little ones, go in debt for more, or bring in the chapel chairs. But have them together and before you.

And if you are half a man, the sight of that array of sweetness and light will make you a preacher in spite of yourself. The boyish heart is chivalrous, so you will have boy ushers to seat the young ladies as they come in. Four of them can take up the offering, and I miss my estimate of the children if they will not feel a swelling pride as they stand with the ushers of the church while the pastor asks God's blessing upon their gifts. Let the gifts be made in tiny numbered envelopes, for the Juniors desire to be regular contributors to the church.

And then you will preach to them. Yes I must use the word, but with its sternness all removed. You will be the child's interpreter as Jesus speaks to their hearts. And you must know their language.

Oh, those blessed ten minutes, never exceeded without loss—what a preparation for the message for their parents by and by!

Then you will sing their hymn, and they will pass out.

Sometimes they will sing in chorus before the "great congregation." Sometimes there will be a whole morning devoted to them. But they will go to their homes in the consciousness of having been in God's house and that God's minister has brought God's message to them.

Then perhaps you have given them textbooks in which to keep record of the sermon preached.

There will be a great day, when at the end of every quarter, these books are returned and examined and some one of the many smiling faces will be doubly radiant as the owner comes forward before the grown-ups to get the prize for the best kept book, or to receive the reward for having written the best outline of a special sermon preached to the children that they might learn the method of properly listening to preaching. Varied as the mind of man are the methods with our boys and girls at church.

If we gather them for a meeting we shall see to it that the whole organization of a local church of the denomination to which they belong is represented to them in miniature. There will needs be deacons and elders and trustees; deaconesses and boards and societies. There will be a prayer meeting, and a board meeting. In short, every branch of the church's activities can be represented in these gatherings of the Juniors during the week. Christian Endeavor methods may prevail, but the main ideal is to get the boys and girls to understand that they are a part of the great church at work and acquaint them with the real activities of church life.

THE MATERIAL OR THE MESSAGE

Under this head I have gathered together a set of sermons preached to my own congregation of boys and girls. And in so doing I have tried to give only those that seemed to reach and influence the child heart. They are not intended to be exhaustive, but only suggestive—mere outlines upon which to build complete sermons.

THE RAILROAD FROG

Text—Job 23:10. "He knoweth the way that I take."
Object—A railroad frog, or one from a child's toy railway.

My Dear Young Travelers:

To-day marks the beginning of a new journey in that great tour of "Life" that you are all making. What can I say to you as you are starting? What advice can I give you as I look back at you from the place to which some of the older of us have come, and as we see you getting on the train just where we once got on?

The other day I was coming out from town on the railroad and when we reached the car yards in the western part of the city we went over an innumerable number of tracks and switches all running together like the threads of a spider's web. We crossed and recrossed and rattled over switch after switch till we finally got on the right track toward home. How we did it seemed, as one looked at it, a mystery that no one could explain. How that train going at full speed, never slowing up, found its way out of that "mystic maze" of tracks and finally got to our station, seemed as we sat in the cars, like doing the impossible.

But it was very easy. Why? Because at each crossing was a "frog,"—like this, only made of steel and much larger, with a point running in between the rails that caught the flange of the wheels and turned them in the proper courses. And because these "cross frogs" were there we got out of the tangle of rails and so at last to our station. I think of your young lives at the beginning of this new year, as the starting of so many trains of cars all moving off together. Paul likened our lives to a race, but in these days of rapid travel we may think of our lives as a train. You leave the station at the first day of the year, and with a full head of steam on you move out on the tracks. It is not long before you get into the tangle of ways. There are a hundred paths and a hundred tracks, and you get confused and do not know just which way you are going, and you get a little anxious as to where you are coming out. But you can go on, for there is a "frog" just ahead which the Great Train Master has put there and when you come to it, it will turn you on to the right track. This frog that I am speaking of, my young fellow voyagers, is *the purpose of God for you.* To-day we make many "resolutions" but few of them will be kept, for we cannot foresee just what is coming in the journey. But God knows. He knows just where he has put the "frog" of his will for you. And when you come to it, your train will slide safely over onto the track where he wants

you to be. That is what Job meant when he said to us in our new-year text—"He knoweth the way that I take."

Now if God has put these frogs of his purposes in our line, our part is simply to go on. How funny it would be if an engineer should get out of his cab at every frog and sit down and wonder why it was put there. That's the business of the superintendent of the road.

But let me ask a moment—what is it that makes it possible for the frog to turn the train in the right track?

It is that part of the wheel which falls below the rail, which we call the "flange." That little flange runs into the grooves of the frog and guides the cars to their destination. And I think that each of us should see as we start this new-year journey, that the flanges of our trains are strong. What shall we call them? "*Trust*," I think. Sometimes the flanges are not perfect and do not follow the frog, and then there is an awful accident and men and women and children are killed. And sometimes we do not want to follow God's purposes, and are not willing that he should guide us. God puts a frog in our way and we jump it and get off the track. But, oh! what a comfortable feeling we can have if we know that the flanges are all right, and we can sit in our seats and bump, and bump over the rails and know that it's all right and we shall come out. When I was in the Catacombs

of Rome—way down among the old dead saints—there was a monk that guided us through the narrow and criss-cross paths, all so pitchy dark and dismal, and I thought of this text, and how glad was I that the monk knew the way that we were to take.

Here is a pretty little story of trust.

Some years ago I took my little boy to church. The pavements were very slippery and although the boy boasted that he could walk alone, he frequently fell, and it was not till he placed his hand in mine that he could walk without the danger of falling. The day after Christmas he said to me "Father, yesterday the Devil tried to make me eat candy that mother said I musn't touch; but he couldn't do it, although I did want it."

I reminded him of the walk we took the previous Sunday, and asked him if he remembered how hard it was to stand up and how often he fell; and also how it was that he finally managed to stand and walk along safely. "Yes, I remember it all," he said; "I put my hand in yours, father."

And then I said, "And now, my boy, when the Devil tempts you to do wrong, how will you be able to stand and walk upright?" And the little fellow answered reverently, "I'll put my hand in God's."

Is that what you boys and girls are willing

to do? "He knoweth the way that you take." Yes, for he has planned every bit of the line. So just keep up your full head of steam and go right along and let God steer you where he wants you to be.

SMOOTHING OUT THE BUMPS

Text—Luke 3 : 5. "And the rough ways shall be made smooth."

Object—A file.

My Dear Juniors:

If you have travelled on the trolley cars much in our city you have probably noticed the jolting that one gets when the wheels of the car hit the cracks at the joints of the rails. And if you live on a street where trolleys run, you have found it difficult on a summer's night to get to sleep because of the constant thump, thump of the wheels over these bumps.

But if you could go out very late at night on some of the streets, you would see men very busily engaged in drawing back and forth over these joints huge files worked by two men, one of whom pushed and one pulled. On inquiring, you would find that they are smoothing out these bumps, and making the passage from one rail to the other less painful to the rider, and less disturbing to the sleeper.

What a benevolent lot of men they seemed to me as I saw them. Engaged in rubbing out bumps while others sleep. Smoothing the paths of others whom perhaps they would never see. And

you have never thought, for I never had before, what a host of men and women in this great weary world are engaged in getting rid of the bumps and smoothing the path for others. There are the railroad section hands that keep the tracks level. There is the engineer that runs the steam roller in front of your home to make the road smooth for driving. Yes, and there is the teacher staying after school to help "little Bill" over the hard places. And best of all there is mother working her dear hands off to make life easier for her boy and girl.

Now our text tells us that John the Baptist was coming to tell of the kingdom of Jesus and to smooth things out in the lives of men so that that kingdom of love might come. For the progress of that kingdom of Jesus means always a smoothing out of the bumps and unevennesses of life. It means hospitals for the sick, and homes for the poor, and orphanages for the little ones and the doing away with war and strife.

So when Jesus comes into our hearts we must at once get rid of all the bumps, and smooth out the path for others in the world about us who have got to travel its highways.

We must try each day to smooth mother's path, and teacher's path, and little sister's or brother's path; and to make life a little better for our playmates and for those who are in need.

And then, too, we can, like John the Baptist,

make the way easier for our dear Lord and Master, Jesus.

When President Garfield was so very ill after the bullet of the assassin had laid him low, the doctors said he must get to the sea. So willing hands worked night and day laying a track from Long Branch to Elberon that his car in which he was being borne might not have to be changed for a carriage, that he might be moved from the White House in Washington to the seashore without a jar.

And so ought we to work, my young laborers, to build a smooth and happy highway along which our King can move.

Some time ago a gentleman did me a kindness, and when I thanked him he said, "Oh, it is nothing! I am in this world to make it move a little more smoothly if I can." What a blessed mission! The other night on one of the great Long Island Sound steamers I watched the oiler reaching out over the great pistons, and as each came round he dropped one drop of oil on the hot bearings—to make them run without friction.

What a happy office one has in life who makes it his or her business to make things run smoothly.

THE FUNNEL, THE SIFTER AND THE SPONGE.

Text—Ps. 119 : 11. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Objects—A funnel, a sifter and a sponge.

My Dear Young Hearers:

Here are some curious objects from the household which may serve us this morning to illustrate the proper and improper ways of treating the word of God that is preached to us each Sunday from this pulpit and taught to us in the Sunday school. I have a funnel, a sifter for flour and a sponge.

There are some of us who hear the word of God after the manner of the funnel. The use of this useful utensil in the kitchen you all know. When mother wants to pour from a large vessel into a small, the narrow neck of this funnel and its broad top make such a thing possible. All goes through nicely without spilling a drop, or leaving any behind. Now some of you boys and girls are apt to treat God's word much as the water that passes through the funnel. You let it all go through easily. Sometimes we say that "it goes in one ear and out of the other." We sit and listen to all that is said, but none of it sticks. It all runs through. By Sunday night it has all gone and we could hardly tell mother when we got home what

the text was. Or perhaps as we listen and take it all in we say to ourselves—"That was a fine sermon for Joe," or "That truth was a good one for Mary," and we let it run right through us for whom it was really meant, hoping that Joe or Mary will hear it and heed it. Now when we do that we are what we might call "funnel hearers," not the kind of hearers that the Psalmist speaks of here.

Then there are some of us who hear the word of God after the manner of the sifter. You have seen the cook sifting flour for her bread-making. Some of it goes through, and a little stays behind. But that which stays behind is usually lumps and dirt, and is thrown away. The good goes through. So it is that some of us hear the word of God. We keep the dirt or the useless part and let all the good go through. Not that any of the word of God is wholly useless, but we often keep and remember the things that are not important. Some study the Bible only to find the flaws in it. Some study only to find the peculiar passages in it. Some hunt to find out the shortest and longest verses. One old man was one day sitting pondering on the word of God and a passerby said to him, "Well, my brother, what have you found in the book to-day that interests you?" And the old man looking up eagerly replied, "I have found that I have two more sheep than Job had." But God did not mean us to use his word that way. It is

filled with messages that are to do us good if we receive them and live them. We are not to sift out the best and keep the merely pleasurable or curious. Such people we might call "sifter hearers."

Then there are some who hear the word of God after the manner of the sponge. Now when we dip the sponge in water, it soaks up the water and instead of letting it go through, it holds it. Every little pore of the sponge takes its share and keeps it. And we can only get the water out by squeezing. I am glad to say that there are men and women and boys and girls that so receive the word of God when it is read, and taught, and preached. So was it with the Psalmist whose words we have quoted to-day. "Thy word," he tells us, "have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." He had taken the word into his heart as the sponge takes the water into itself.

It was England's queen who told us to "mark, learn and inwardly digest" the word of God. "Thy words were found and I did eat them" says one of God's prophets. These then are the "sponge hearers." Now look—I am going to dip this sponge in this red ink. See—it takes up and holds the color of the ink. If I take sin into my soul it will stain it forever. But if I take up God's word into my life, my life will be always colored with God's truth. Let us then learn to be "sponge hearers." Take heed how ye hear. And remember

the words of the apostle, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly."

It is marvelous how like to a sponge the brains of you young Christians are. Think of the wonderful things you have absorbed in the last few years. You learn more in your first five years of life than you will ever learn in the next twenty. By and by when you grow old and gray you will be better able to tell about what is happening in your lives to-day than what happened the day when you were fifty.

It is marvelous to consider the number of things that you learn in your childhood.

And I hope that you will take up and retain as well that which is of more value than all your stores of knowledge—the message of God to our souls. Just as in the sponge the water fills every one of the many pores, so let God's word go into every little portion of your young lives.

When Paul tells us to let the word of God "dwell in us richly," he really says in the language in which he wrote—"keep house." And we know that when we keep house we have access to all the rooms. So are we to let God's word come into every chamber and secret closet. Open your eyes and ears, but above all open your hearts to the entrance of the word of God.

BOLTS AND HINGES

Objects—Some iron bolts and hinges of various sorts.

My Dear Juniors:

I have in my hand this morning some things that are very useful in the building of a house. This fellow here is a screw bolt and this one a door hinge. And while they both enter into the construction of the building, they produce vastly different results. I have brought them here for you because you are yourselves doing some building. You are all little master-builders.

And more than that, you are building a house which is to be the dwelling place of a King. "Ye are God's building," says the apostle.

And there is a place for both of these objects which I hold, in the house of self, that you are erecting.

Sometimes you will want to use the one, sometimes the other.

Will you let me tell you now when each is best —the times when hinges are better than bolts, and when bolts are better than hinges?

First then—the time when a hinge is best.

In his letter to the Philippian Christians Paul says, "Let your moderation be known to all men." Now boys and girls, that word "moderation" means really "yieldingness," the power of giving

up and giving in. It means meekness, but not weakness. Sometimes we get the idea that to yield is to be a "mollycoddle." Nothing of the kind. It's the bravest kind of bravery to be able to "give up."

Now some people are put together like this—(Illustrate by the bolt which is stiff and unyielding)—no give to them, no gentleness in them, no moderation in them.

When is it better then to be a hinge that moves back and forth?

In times of an injury done you by another.

Jesus used the hinge in his life most of the time. He was forgiving. Lord Eardly Wilmot once said, "It may be manly to resent an injury, but it is Christlike to forgive one."

There was once an old woman who had been a very great sinner, and had had a very vile tongue. She had given herself to Jesus, and one day one of her old companions came up and tried to provoke her, ending by calling her "a good-for-nothing old hag," but the old lady had put a hinge in where the bolt used to be and she answered—"Yes, and isn't it wonderful that Jesus Christ could save an old hag like me?"

If I strike this hinge thus, it will bend. And Jesus said that we are to turn the other cheek. "A soft answer turneth away wrath."

There are times then when it is better to be a hinge than a bolt.

And it is better in the time of trouble.

It is better to bend than to break. It is better to smile than stiffly to bear our sorrows. When you were little fellows you used to run on the melting ice on the pond doing what we called "running benders." And you used to cry out as you ran, "As long as she bends she holds." When we bend under trials we do not suffer so.

But there are times when a bolt is decidedly better.

Paul tells the Corinthians in his first letter to them—"Be ye steadfast, unmovable."

It is always better to be a bolt when it comes to a matter of doing right.

It is always better to be a bolt when it is a matter of doing our duty.

Joseph used a lot of bolts in his building. Daniel was bolted together fast. So were the three young men who went into the fiery furnace. Jesus found it very often better to use the bolts than the hinges, as when he drove the money changers out of the temple.

Boys and girls, always have plenty of backbone.

And be sure you always know when to use one and when to use the other.

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Object—A loaf of bread.

My Dear Young Disciples:

I am sure that every boy or girl here to-day knows what it is to be hungry. I should be worried about you if you did not. For somehow hunger is a part of the program of your childhood.

Now hunger is universal. No matter who the boy is or where he is, he is bound to be hungry. All the wealth of Crœsus, or as better known to you, of Mr. Rockefeller, would not prevent that. So God in his mercy and wisdom has made arrangements for that, and we find that bread, too, is universal. No matter what other kinds of food the different nations eat, with few exceptions bread is everywhere. In Scotland the boys and girls eat "scones," in Germany they eat "Kaiser rolls," in Italy the great cart-wheel loaves of coarse flour; in France bread which, because of its yard-long lengths, looks as though it might be rightly called the "staff of life," and be taken for Mr. Roosevelt's "big stick." And here in our own dear homeland we eat the finest of the wheat.

Jesus knew that we would all be hungry, and all eat bread, and so he taught us to say as we pray—"Give us this day our daily bread."

Now all bread comes of course from God the Father. When he sent the manna in the wilderness, it was to teach them whence their provisions came. Sometimes we feel that we have earned our bread, or that the farmer has produced it for us, but we must recollect that:

"Back of the bread is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill,
And back of the mill the wheat and the shower
And the sun, and the Father's will."

But there is another kind of hunger, my hungry young Christians. We call it soul hunger. What is that? Well, did you ever when you were little, very little of course, do a naughty thing, and when mother's heart was vexed and the tears were in her eyes because of your naughty deed, run to her arms and sob—"I want to be good mother, I want to be good"?

Yes, of course you have. And when you were saying "I want to be good" you had a hungry feeling in your little heart for goodness. You had soul hunger just then. Of course you did not know it was that, but it was. And just as God sent you bread from heaven to feed your bodily hunger so he sends you bread for your soul hunger. Jesus tells you about it in the Gospel of John. For he talks about being himself the "Bread which cometh down from heaven." He tells us he is the bread of which if a man eat he shall never hunger and shall live forever. Jesus offers him-

self to be that bread. And when you are hungry to be good, Jesus offers himself to your young hearts to satisfy you and make you good.

It is a good thing to be hungry when there is bread in the closet, but a poor thing when there is not. But there is always heavenly bread in the closet. Jesus is always ready to feed you with his life, and he says, "Blessed are they that hunger—after righteousness, for they shall be fed."

All bread costs something. It costs labor and sacrifice. That is why we call patient, toiling father the "bread winner;" he has to win it by the energies of his life. And soul bread costs something too. Jesus said, "The bread which I give to the world is my flesh." And to give us his life he had to die on the cross.

To-day we have spread before you the bread of the communion. It is only earthly bread, but it represents to us soul bread. It speaks to us of that bread which is Jesus' own life which he broke on the cross and gave to us. Will you not learn to see that when you are soul hungry this is the place to come and meet Jesus and let him feed you? I hope that you will.

LIFTERS AND LEANERS

Text—Gal. 6 : 2. "Bear ye one another's burdens."

Objects—A wooden handle for carrying bundles, and a small toy ladder.

My Dear Young Christians:

I have in my hand to-day two little symbols that denote the two classes into which I have been able to divide all the people in the world. I wonder if it ever occurred to you, as it did to me, to see into what two classes we could put all mankind if we were called to divide them into halves as you do when you are choosing up sides for a game of tag. First of all I tried to put them into the two classes which we call "good" and "bad." But I soon found that this was impossible for they would get so horribly mixed up. I found that some of those that I had set on the "good" side of the line would constantly go over on to the "bad" side of the line and that those that I had labeled "bad" would get over somehow on to the "good" side of the line. And I came to the conclusion, as Jesus did when he told the young ruler, that there were none wholly "good" but God. I found that

> "There is so much good in the worst of us,
> And so much bad in the best of us,
> That it little behooves the most of us,
> To talk about the rest of us."

There is good in the very worst of men at times. Some time ago I read of a criminal who was being taken across the street from the prison to the court room in one of our crowded cities, and who while crossing the street saw a little child fall in front of an advancing trolley car. Instantly he broke from his escort and picked the child from the jaws of death only to be run down and terribly injured himself.

Then I thought I could put them into two classes called "happy" and "sad"; but when I had put them there, the sad began to be happy and the happy began to be sad, and I knew that every happy life has its sad days and every sad life its happy days, and I knew that this would never do; for I remembered the poet says:

> "Into each life some rain must fall,
> Some days must be dark and dreary."

Then I divided them into "rich" and "poor"; but here again I was at fault for I saw at once that those that I had put on the rich side of the line were constantly longing for the things that they had who were on the poor side of the line. There were millionaires who wanted the health and the happy children of those on the "poor" side, and there were those on the "poor" side that would not give them, for all the gold, to those on the "rich" side of the line. So I knew that many poor are rich, and many rich are poor. It would never do.

Then once more I tried making them all into either those that were "humble" or those that were "vain." But when I came to hunt for those I thought humble, I found that they were some of the proudest of the proud, and those that I had first thought vain, were among the humblest of all. But after much thought I reached the mark. I divided my people into the "handle" people and the "ladder" people. The "lifters" and the "leaners." For this little handle lifts up. And this little ladder always has to have something to lean against before it can be of use. Yes, boys and girls, all the world is divided into those that lift and those that lean. They may be happy or sad, rich or poor, humble or proud, good or bad, but they are all in one of these classes—those who lift up others' burdens, or those that have to lean upon others.

And you will find twenty leaners for every lifter. Now are you a lifter helping carry another's heavy load, or are you a weak-kneed leaner putting your load on others?

When we were boys and a "feller" leaned on us we used to show our disdain for him by saying curtly, "Lean on your own breakfast."

So does the world speak to the leaner. Your value, my dear Juniors, will be measured in God's sight and man's, by your power to bear another's burden and not by the way you have of making him bear yours.

INSULATED CHRISTIANS

Text—II Cor. 6:17. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing;* and I will receive you."

Objects—A piece of insulated telegraph wire. Strip off some of the coverings of the insulation. A bit of crude rubber.

My Dear Young Christians:

I hold in my hand here a bit of wire used in making the electric connections for our church organ. You will see that I have stripped off some of the various coverings that enfold it, in order that you may see how the copper wire within that carries the electric current is so protected that it may not be brought in contact with anything that would rob it of its power. Not long ago I had the privilege of going through that great wire factory in Trenton, New Jersey, where much of the insulated wire used in electric work is made. It was a most interesting experience. We saw the crude rubber such as I hold in my hand, washed and rolled in great hot rollers till it was quite soft and smooth, then mixed again and again in other rollers with the compound that made it fit for wrapping ; then cleaned and put through various processes until it was cut in strips and mechanically wrapped about the copper wire that already had had a coating of cotton thread. Then the rubber coated wire was beautifully wrapped by a lot of

little bobbins in just the style that you boys and girls may have wrapped a Maypole, only a hundred times quicker, and better; and then subjected to a dipping in a coat of tar preparation to keep it from the weather. Then it was sent down to the testing room to be tested. A long tank of water charged with many volts of electricity through which the wire was drawn revealed its weaknesses. For if there was a spot where the wrapping was imperfect, there would be a splutter and snapping and a beautiful light would light up the whole tank. Where the weakness occurred the place was marked and the wire was sent back to the repair shop to be wrapped by hand once more.

Singular that so much trouble was taken with a bit of wire, isn't it? But we are to remember that that wire would carry power, and that in the carrying it would come in contact with many things that, being conductors as we call them, would take away its power and so rob it of its usefulness. Hence all the trouble that was taken to render it "insulated" or separate.

Now there are such things as "insulated Christians." And it is to these that Paul is writing when he says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing." The man or boy who does that is "insulated." Years ago in the history of Israel, when the people of God had gotten so mixed up with the life of the heathen about them that it was hard

to tell which were and which were not God's people, there came forth a sect of Nazarites, or "separated ones." They wore long hair and drank no wine and kept vows of purity of life, to show Israel what kind of people God's people ought to be. They were "insulated Israelites."

You all remember John the Baptist who was a "burning and shining light" for Christ. But you cannot be a burning and shining light unless like the great electric arc lights we see in the streets, you are insulated. Now John the Baptist was insulated. He separated himself from all the wickedness of his day, living in the wilderness, eating locusts and wild honey. He was an "insulated Christian." Sometimes we sing:

> "Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light
> Like a little candle burning in the night."

God has made you boys and girls the wires for the carrying of light and love to others. The Holy Spirit can use you for the transmission of his power, but you must be so insulated that you will avoid touching the "unclean thing"—all sins of the flesh and heart. Now the church and the Sunday school are like a great insulated wire factory, where we are trying so to fit you that contact with the world will not rob you of your power, and I am hoping that when the test is made all the boys and girls here will not splutter, nor snap, but will be proof against temptations.

THE GIRL ON THE PENNY

Text—Isa. 49 : 16. "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."

Object—A penny.

My Dear Juniors:

I wonder if any one of you has ever seen his picture printed in the daily newspapers? If so what a feeling of satisfaction it has given you and at least a little pride. That is, if the picture is not a woodcut, which some wag has called "the most unkindest cut of all." I think you know some people who would move heaven and earth to get their pictures in the newspapers. And if you have ever been to see any spot that is particularly historical or sacred, you will find the names and initials of a host of silly people cut in the wood of the bench or written upon the walls. When I was in Shakspere's birthplace in England last summer I saw a ceiling and walls in one of the rooms so covered that it would have been impossible to put another name there without writing over two or three others. We all love notoriety and publicity when it does not cost us anything, or when we are sure it will not ruin our reputation.

But let me tell you of a little girl who got that publicity and notoriety unsought, and whose little

face was, up to a year or so ago, in more homes in this land than any other. Indeed there was not a home of even the poorest that was not glad to look upon her sweet little face. Now get out your pennies and see if you have one with the head of what we all have mistaken for an Indian. Yes, here is a girl that has one. Now look sharp. Do you see any Indian features there? Not a bit of it. Not a trace of them.

It is the head of a gracious American woman, who for many years was held in admiration both for her beauty and her goodness, and who only a few weeks ago passed on to her great reward.

Her name was Keen—Sarah Longacre Keen. She lived in Philadelphia. For thirty-five years she was the secretary of the Philadelphia Branch of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

When Sarah was a child of five or six years of age a delegation of Indians from the northwest visited Washington. They came to see the sights and pay their respects to the Big Chief of the nation. After having spent considerable time at the capital, the Indians were taken to Philadelphia. Here they were shown the mint. The little girl's father was a fine engraver, and he had official connection with this great money factory. He was a kindly, benevolent man as well, and he invited this delegation of red men to some sort of

entertainment at his home. One of the chiefs had his attention attracted to the little miss, and he was so pleased with her figure and maidenly bearing that in a mood of sportiveness he took off his headdress and put it on her head. She was not frightened; but, lending herself to the enjoyment of the joke, she stood for a moment and let the company look at her. Some one present, who had both an eye for beauty and artistic skill, was so struck by the appearance which little Sarah Longacre made in her Indian hat that he sketched her on the spot. The sketch was engraved by her father.

When the Government wanted a new face to put on the new one cent pieces they chose this engraving, and little Sarah Keen's features became the best known face in America.

But there is a far better place than a cent on which our names and faces may be put, and put forever. Our text tells us that the great and good God promises to engrave our names and our faces upon the palms of his mighty hands. This was his promise to Israel. So dearly did he love his chosen people that he wished to have them in constant remembrance, and so put their names upon the palms of his mighty hands. We are all aware that God does not have hands like man, but it means that so dear are you children to God that he keeps you in constant remembrance. Stop and think what the "mighty hand of God"

hath done in the world and then remember that on that mighty hand the names of God's chosen ones are written.

What makes it possible for us to be thus remembered? This—that we in turn shall bind God's laws upon our hands. In Deut. 6 : 8 we read, "And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand." Keep God's will ever before us and God will keep us ever before him.

NOT SO FUNNY THEN

Text—Luke 12 : 20.
Object—A toy barn.

My Dear Young Christians:

This story we have read this morning was told by Jesus. I think we are all familiar with it. And if in it the master called a man a hard name—thou fool,—I think you will agree with me that he was but describing the character of the man and not abusing him. He was a man who forgot that when he lay down at night, there was a possibility of his dying before he woke; that there was a chance that his eyes, which had closed filled with a vision of his worldly goods, might open in a land where he would seek for those same barns and corn and wheat and comforts in vain. And if that man had known that he would die he would have done differently, oh! how differently. Some of that extra corn and wheat would have found its way into the larders of his poor neighbors. And instead of eating and drinking and being merry he would have gone out into the highways and hedges and bidden some poor wanderer to come in and share his rich fare. Jesus called him a "fool" because he did not realize that he might die before he woke.

I suppose there is not a boy or girl here today who does not know that prayer of childhood: "Now I lay me down to sleep," which has in it this little "if"—"If I should die before I wake."

Little Donny was kneeling at grandmother's knee, and saying his evening prayer. "'F I should die 'fore I wake"——

"I pray," prompted a gentle voice. "Go on, Donny."

"Wait a minute," interposed the small boy, scrambling to his feet, and hurrying down stairs. In a few moments he was in his place again, and dropping on his knees took up his little prayer just where he had left it. But when the little white gowned form was safely tucked in bed, grandmother bent over and questioned him lovingly as to why he had faltered. "But I did not think what I was sayin,' grandmother, and that's why I had to stop. You see I upset Tod's menagerie, and stood all his wooden soldiers on their heads, just to see how he'd tear round in the morning. But if I should die 'fore I wake, why—I didn't want him to find them that way, So I had to go down and fix 'em right. There's lots of things that seem funny if you're goin' to keep on livin' but you don't want 'em that way if you should die afore you wake."

I think we all think alike with Donny. And I want to tell you young people a few of the things

that we want to set right in case we should die "afore we wake."

First.—We should want to have given our young hearts to Jesus. "If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take."

If we want Jesus to take our souls into his blessed keeping, we must give them to him to-day. It will be too late when we have gone to sleep. Say now while we are awake:

> "Jesus, take this heart of mine,
> Make it pure and wholly thine,
> Thou hast bled and died for me,
> I would henceforth live for thee."

Second.—We should want to put back that penny that we took off mother's bureau the other day, and which has burned like a red hot coal in our conscience ever since. We should want to take back that lie we told to father when we looked him square in the eye and denied our guilt, because we could not bear to meet Jesus with that sin unconfessed. And we should want to go away over to Mary Long's and take back that unkind thing we said about her the other day. We would want to make all these things right, because you know they seem so different when a fellow is perhaps going to die before he wakes.

Third.—I think we would go and make up with Bill. We "had it out" in the back lot last week and we have not spoken since, but Bill's a

"good feller" and if we are not going to live forever, we might slip away without "fixin' it up." Yes, Juniors, there are many, many things that do not look so funny "if we should die afore we wake." But we can never be sure of that, so we had better begin and set things right now.

PHŒBE

Text—Rom. 16 : 1.
Object—A cogwheel.

My Dear Juniors:

Like Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, I want this morning to commend to you "Phœbe our sister." She is mentioned only once in the New Testament, and only to tell us that she carried a letter from Corinth to Rome. A small matter you say to make her name memorable wherever the Bible is read. But though she carried only a letter, just think what a letter that letter was. For the piece of parchment or papyrus which she so carefully carried was Paul's great letter to the Romans, that great letter in which is set forth the whole system of doctrine which we as Christians believe concerning our salvation. A great French writer named Renan has said that Phœbe carried the future of Christian doctrine with her. It was only one thing that she did, and we never hear of her again. But think what it meant for the church of Christ, and think what it meant for us to-day. For in that epistle more than all others is God's grace revealed to us.

I have here in my hands a cogwheel such as they use in mills.

You see the numerous little cogs or levers that

it contains. Now as the wheel revolves against its fellow wheel each of these little cogs meets and strikes the cog in the other wheel but once in each revolution. Only once, but if that little cog failed or was broken it would throw all the machinery out of gear.

The other day I was listening to a symphony played by a great orchestra, and way up at the back of the stage sat a man with a pair of cymbals in his hands. I had had my eye on him for a long time wondering what he would do and when he would do it. But he sat as still and motionless as a statue. Suddenly in the very last piece of music, as the volume of sound swelled great and greater, the man arose and brought his cymbals together in a mighty crash, that was like a thunderclap, and set the echoes running into all the corners of the great building.

Only once. That was the only part he took in the whole performance, and yet without that one crash of cymbals the whole would have been ruined. The most extraordinary band is that in the Imperial Palace at Moscow in Russia. In this band each performer plays on his instrument but one single note, and yet so perfect is the skill and training of these men that they produce the most perfect harmony. But if one of those little pipes upon which they play should fail to blow just once, that harmony would be spoiled.

All these illustrations are to show us that

there is some one thing for each of us to do. And that if we do not do that one thing the whole harmony of life will be spoiled. It may be that we know what that thing is, or we may be in ignorance of it. Therefore the safe way to deal with all such matters is to do the very next thing that is asked of you that is good, and believe that is the one. For that will be our part. Life is like a great machine with many cogs all fitting into one another, and if one cog fails to do its duty all is spoiled.

The great church of Christ is composed of "wheels within wheels," as the prophet tells us, and if the smallest of these wheels shall fail the whole great machinery of the church loses power. I have an old-fashioned music box at home that is practically ruined because one little cog in the great wheel attached to the spring failed to do its part and the other cogs slipped against the ratchet and were hopelessly broken and the music stilled. Boys and girls, like "Phœbe our sister," learn to do the thing that God has given you in life to do with all your might. You will never know just how important it is.

It is often the simplest duties that prove of greatest worth ; I commend to you " Phœbe."

PALMS OR GARMENTS?

Text—Matt. 21 : 8. Palm-Sunday Address.
Objects—A palm leaf and a small imitation of an eastern tunic.

My Dear Sons and Daughters of the Tabernacle:

This is Palm Sunday, and this beautiful day brings to our minds that other lovely spring day in Palestine, when Jesus came over the Judæan hills into his city of Jerusalem attended by the great throng of Galilæans, who with shouts of "Hosannah," preceded and followed him in the brief triumph he was to have before the crucifixion.

In that throng were a crowd of children, whom Jesus afterwards heard singing and shouting his praise in the temple, and whose loyalty and enthusiasm Jesus so heartily commended. These, too, joined in that act of devotion with the rest; some tearing off branches of palm and strewing them in the way before him, and others taking off their outer garments and spreading them, like carpets of royal purple before a king, in his onward way. Palms or garments ; which are you boys and girls laying before him to-day ? For each of these indicates a different degree of devotion and love for Jesus. The garments, of course, were the most costly. Even the peasant took great pride in his outer garments, which were

made of camel's hair or goat's or lamb's wool, and were the most expensive article of dress he possessed. They were striped brown and white, or blue and white and must have presented a rather pretty sight when the different colors got together in a great crowd. But the palm branches cost them little. The trees on either side of the road would furnish these for the simple trouble of reaching up and breaking them off. And some cast their garments in the way and some only palm branches, and bits of foliage. Both were acts of devotion, but one showed a greater devotion than the other.

If Jesus should ride into our town to-day, would you children of the King throw down your best garments under his feet or be satisfied to give him palm branches only?

I was at one time telling some boys about this scene in the life of our Master when one of them spoke up and asked, "If they put their coats down on the ground in front of the donkey on which Jesus was riding didn't the donkey's feet make their coats dirty?" Now that boy had grasped the idea. He understood what some of us overlook, that it cost something more to put down coats than it did to put down merely branches.

I expect that that donkey was not too careful where he stepped, and I suspect some coats got torn and dirty that day. But what of that? Jesus was honored and those who owned them

were happier far for the patches and darns they had to wear. Think of having a coat with a patch on the side and being able to say, "The ass on which Jesus rode stepped on my coat just here." What would we give for a coat like that to-day? But the palm wavers would find that their palms would wither, and they would have little to be proud of.

On this day when we celebrate the triumph of Jesus, both in going into his city of Jerusalem, and his city of glory above, what shall our offering be? Shall we cast down only palms that cost us nothing, or shall we give him garments that are costly?

Mrs. Ballington Booth of the Volunteers of America tells us that when she was a little girl she and her brothers used to play Noah's Ark and offer the animals on the altar in sacrifice; but it was always the broken ones that were offered.

A little girl who was the daughter of a minister had been to church one morning and heard the minister pleading for an offering to the Lord and saying that the difference between an offering and a collection was that the "offering" was what we give gladly and from thoughtful hearts and that the "collection" was simply what we happen to have left in our pockets. That day at dinner her little dog Fido came and begged piteously for a mouthful. "No, my dear" said her mother, "you must not feed Fido now, but you can give

him what is left after dinner." So after dinner she scraped all the plates and found only a few chicken bones. These she took out to the kennel and said sadly, "Here, Fido dear, I wanted to give you an offering, but I could only get a collection."

I wonder how many of us to-day are simply giving to Jesus what costs us little, what we happened to have left over. Let us take off our costly garments, the things we value truly, and give them as offerings to our triumphing King Jesus.

THE CRYING STONES

Text—Luke 19 : 40. Palm-Sunday Sermon.

Object—A bit of stone taken from some noted church, or any bit of stone.

My Dear Little Pilgrims:

I hold in my hand to-day a bit of the marble taken from the floor of St. Peter's Cathedral while it was being repaired. It is one of the "stones of the temple" of which Jesus is speaking in our text this morning. Not of the original temple but of a great house of God in Rome. You all recall on this Palm Sunday that wonderful entry of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem, and how the great multitudes that had accompanied him from Galilee and those that had come out to meet him as he rode in lowly state on the little ass, had torn the branches from the trees and cast their garments in his path crying out, "Hosannah to the son of David." Now in that crowd were many children and with all the enthusiasm with which you boys and girls follow a great procession these children had kept up that cry long after they had entered the city gates and even the temple itself. The scribes and Pharisees, annoyed at both the children's crying in the temple and the nature of their cry, ordered Jesus to rebuke them, as they had asked him to rebuke his disciples. Matthew and Luke

tell us what Jesus said in reply. Matthew says he said, "Hear what these say." Luke says he said, "If these should hold their peace the very stones would cry out." And what he meant was just this—if you do not let these boys and girls worship me here in God's holy temple, the very stones that are in the floors and in the walls of the temple itself will cry out in their stead.

What, then, can we learn as our Palm-Sunday lesson from these words of Jesus?

First.—That Jesus must have worship. His life is such that he requires it. He is so worthy of it that it must come. In that wonderful picture in John's Book of Revelation the great hosts of heaven cry, "Worthy is the Lamb . . . to receive power, and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

The very nature of Jesus and his glorious kingly character demand praise.

Second.—We are to learn that it is most natural that boys and girls should praise him. The old gray-bearded scribes and the haughty wrinkle-faced old Pharisees, who had forgotten all about how it feels to be a boy, thought not, but Jesus knew better. For Jesus knew all about children, because he lived much with them and loved them. He had not forgotten his own boyhood and how he loved to shout and run and play. He knew that God had made these children's mouths to praise him. And more than that, he knew that

God gets the most perfect of all praises from you boys and girls, for in the eighth Psalm we read, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he hath perfected praise."

Third.—We must learn that if you children do not praise him, lifeless objects will. The stones will cry out. It was an old proverb, written by Habbakuk, that Jesus was quoting. "For the stones shall cry out of the wall"—. And you boys and girls who remember your Bible stories will remember how those very stones cried out when Jesus was crucified and again when Jerusalem was taken by her enemies.

To-day in the East they are digging down into buried cities and coming upon stones with inscriptions that are proving the truth of so much that Jesus said and taught. These stones are praising him. Shall children be worse than sticks and stones and senseless things? All nature this beautiful Sunday of palms is lifting up its voice to praise our King. Shall we not join created things in adding our praise? Jesus loves to hear your voices in the sanctuary. He loves to see you in the church. You may praise him as loud as you will, and there will be no gray-bearded Pharisee to stop you. Learn, then, to come to this temple which we have erected here in which to worship our King and Saviour.

HOW JESUS CAME DOWN THE STAIRS

Text—Phil. 2 : 6-9.

Objects—A pair of stairs made of cardboard with the treads of the steps removable and on which the following words have been written: "In the Form of God," "Humbled Himself," "Took Upon Him the Form of a Servant," "Likeness of Men," "Obedient Unto Death" and at the foot of the stairs a small cross.

My Dear Juniors:

This week we shall be thinking continually of the death of Jesus in our behalf. And we shall value that death of Jesus for us much more highly if we know just what it cost him to come to this earth at all and still more what it cost him to die on the cross. In the verses of Paul's letter to the Philippians which I have read to you just now, we find a picture of a pair of steps, and those of the boys and girls who have eyes that see things and minds that discern things have perhaps already seen that picture. But that you may better see it, I have brought these little stairs to-day. And we will build anew the steps down which the Saviour came from his home in glory that he might be our Saviour. Let us then lay upon the topmost stone this step, the step where Jesus stood when he began to come down. "*In the form of God.*" Now we believe that Jesus was of the same divine substance as God, but we are

told here that he was also in the form of God. So that he was just like God. What a glory that was for the Master. He and his Father were one. He held the highest place then in the universe, when he began to descend to us poor sinners.

Then we lay for the first step down this truth, "*He humbled himself.*" He laid aside the form of God which had been his prize and glory. He did what it is so hard for us all to do. He humbled himself. We all love ourselves and our own comfort and honor so much better than we love all else. But Jesus took the first step down—he humbled himself.

Then we put on the next step—"*Took upon him the form of a servant.*" Servant here means slave. Think of it, boys, think of it, girls. This Jesus, the Son of God and equal with him, took the form of a slave. That means that he took upon him all the things that make a slave a slave, that make a slave a servant. He whom angels served, was now to serve like a slave in the service of men. That is coming down somewhat, isn't it?

Now put on the next step down—"*Likeness of men.*" Still he descends, going farther and farther down the stairs of his humiliation. Up to this point he might have retained his heavenly form, even while he was serving men, for we are told that angels become the ministers of men. But Jesus came way down to our level. He became one of us. He was made like man, born in a

lowly manger of a lowly mother, one of the weakest of weak little babes.

Once, so we are told, King Henry VIII, went and slept all night in the little square prison in London which they called the "Chicken Compter," where they put men who stole their neighbors' chickens, to know how it felt to the imprisoned ones. But he got out next day. But Jesus came and took all our sorrow into his own life.

There is another step—"*Obedient unto death*" and just at the bottom of the last stair we will place this little cross, for it was death upon the cruel cross to which our Master became obedient. "I do not mine own will but the will of him that sent me," he said. Do you know what it means to be thus obedient unto death? You know what it is to obey to give up some cherished pleasure, don't you? But not to death.

Once there was a mountain prince in the far East who was at war with the reigning king, and when the king demanded his surrender the prince called one of his men and in the presence of the emissary ordered him to plunge a dagger into his own heart. This the soldier did and fell dead at his master's feet. Then said he to the emissary, "Go back and tell your king that I have a thousand men like that." Obedient unto death.

So Jesus our Master came all the way down the stairs from heaven to earth to die for you and for me. What will you do for him to-day?

HOW TO SEE THE RISEN JESUS

My Dear Juniors:

On this bright Easter Day, while we are all thinking of the risen Jesus, I have a question to ask you. And because I do not believe you can answer it, I am going to answer it myself.

Who saw Jesus rise? Do you know? We see him laid away in the tomb, the great stone rolled against the rock-hewn cave, the seal of Rome placed upon it, the guard of soldiers set, and then suddenly we find him talking to Mary outside the tomb.

Who saw him shake off the graveclothes of death and come forth? The only possible witnesses of whom I can think at this moment were the angels; but they came down to roll the stone away and to warn the women, only *after* Christ had risen, and when the grave was already empty, so they did not see him rise.

The women—these came to the tomb very early, but they found the grave already empty.

The soldiers—but the stone was there before the tomb till the angel came, and after that they were so frightened that they fainted and saw nothing.

Who then saw him come forth? No one. Then how do we know that he did? We have ample

proof that he came forth in the way he appeared to many of those that loved him. To those sorrowing disciples that loved him he showed himself. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Now doesn't it seem a little strange to you boys and girls that these disciples did not get that joy sooner? It might have come to them if they had obeyed him. For Jesus had bidden them meet him in Galilee saying, "But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee." And his first message to the women had been, "Go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you."

But instead of obeying him and going into Galilee, they stayed sadly in Jerusalem, and for twenty-four hours they missed the greatest joy in all the world.

Now what can we get out of all this?

Jesus appeared to men's physical eyes. He showed himself to the women, to the two that were going home to Emmaus that sad night, to Thomas the doubter, to the five hundred brethren at once.

Jesus appeared in visions to many of those that loved him, to their mind's eye. He showed himself to the mind's eye of Paul on the way to Damascus, to the Apostle John at Patmos, to Francis of Assisi, and Joan of Arc, and Catherine of Sienna.

He appeared also by his spirit to the heart's eye of those that loved him. "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way," said John and Cleopas.

While none of us can have the first, and few of us will have the second, we can all have the third method of seeing the risen Jesus. We can all be sure this glad Easter Day that he is risen, by seeing him with our spiritual eyes. Jesus said to the disciples, "Go ye into Galilee and you shall see me there." He says so to-day.

Where, then, is the Galilee where we can go and see Jesus? Just where he reveals himself. Now, Jesus reveals himself in the Bible. "These are they" says he of the Scriptures, "that testify of me." Jesus is in this Bible. If you take him out you will have little left. You can see him in the closet where you go to pray. You cannot talk to a dead Christ. And if you get an answer to your prayers as I am sure you all do when you pray aright, then he must be there in heaven. If I go to the telephone and get no answer from the other end, I hang up. But if I am sure there is some one there I keep on talking. You can see Jesus in the lives of others. That is a Galilee. In that beautiful "Legend of Sir Launfal" the knight sees Christ in the leper. We see Jesus when we are ministering to others.

Then, too, you will see Jesus when you keep his commandments. Jesus himself promised, "He that

hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me : and I will . . . manifest myself unto him." But the disciples did not obey, and they lost that vision for twenty-four sad hours.

Would you boys and girls like to see the risen Jesus with your hearts' eyes? Then go to Galilee, the Galilee of the Bible — prayer, service, obedience—and he will show himself unto you.

JESUS, THE GARDENER

Text—John 20 : 15.
Objects—Flowers and gardening implements.

Jesus once said to Simon of Capernaum concerning Mary Magdalene, "She that hath been most forgiven will love the most" and Easter morning showed that saying of Jesus to be true. For it was Mary who when the others had gone away from the tomb of Jesus, stood looking anxiously into the empty vault and would not give up till she had found him. It was to this love, too, that Jesus manifested himself. If you would see Jesus, my young friends, you must learn to love him, for you remember that since he died he never has shown himself to those that did not love him.

Mary first sees the angels, and then turning she sees Jesus himself standing. But so greatly have his resurrection garments and glory changed him that at first she does not know him. She takes him for the keeper of the garden in which the tomb was,—"she, supposing him to be the gardener saith." It was natural she should be so mistaken. It was a garden, we are told, in which the new tomb was. In these days we do not make cemeteries out of our gardens, but we try our best to make gardens out of our cemeteries. We cover them

with flowers and the cruel gash that the grave has made we cover up with flowers of every sort.

There was no place for graves in the world at first, only for gardens. God made the garden in Eden, and then sin came along and carved a grave where Cain buried his slain brother.

But the day will come again when there shall be no more graves, but only gardens once more. Christ will come again and level up the graves and plant flowers.

Mary found no beauty in the garden while the grave was in it.

It was a beautiful spring morning and being in the month of Nisan, the flower month, the garden I imagine was filled with flowers of all sorts, and seeing a man standing, she naturally thought it was he who cared for the garden, and she so addressed him.

But she soon found when he spoke the loving words to her, that it was Jesus. And yet, boys and girls, I do not think she was much mistaken after all. "She, supposing him to be the gardener" —well, is not that just what Jesus was and is?

This bright Easter Day we have banked our churches with flowers to make them look like gardens, and as we gaze upon their beauty, I want you to think with Mary that Jesus is a gardener.

We have thought of him as many things. He said he is "The Door." He said he is "The Shepherd," "The Light of the World," but many artists

have thought of him, too, as a gardener and represented him with such instruments as these in his hands.

"She, supposing him to be the gardener." Why was she right?

First.—Because it was he by whom God made all things. He was the power by whom God made this world. "Without him was not anything made that was made." And the first thing we hear about God was—that he was a gardener.

The first story of God in the Bible tells us that he planted a garden called Eden; he filled it with all possible beauty and loveliness, and that he gave it to an under gardener to till and take care of, named Adam. God loves gardens, and flowers.

"The Lord God planted a garden
In the first white days of the world;
And set there an angel warden
In a garment of light unfurled.

"The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth;
One is nearer God's heart in a garden,
Than anywhere else on earth."

Second.—Because Jesus sends all the flowers that bloom in your garden and mine. Have you never seen him walking in your garden, as Adam saw God walking in his garden of Eden at the close of the day?

He plants the seeds, and waters them. He brings the rain and the dews, the sunshine and the showers

upon them. Sometimes we think we are making things grow. We trim and we cultivate with our rakes and hoes and scissors, but it is Jesus after all that gives them life. For he is the author of all life.

"We plow the fields and scatter the good seed in the land,
But it is fed and watered by God's own loving hand.
He sends the snow in winter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes and the sunshine and soft refreshing rain."

In one of the beautiful Old Testament poems, Jesus is spoken of as "My beloved who is gone down into his garden . . . to gather lilies." These beautiful Easter plants are his handiwork as the gardener. And Mary could have seen the Saviour in no more beautiful form than that of a gardener.

Third.—Then Jesus is a gardener I think because he has opened the gates of Paradise to all believers. When he threw open the tomb in that beautiful eastern garden and threw down its stone, he opened the gate into heaven. It is through that gate we go into the most beautiful garden of all.

The Greek word for heaven is "Paridiso," which means a garden.

The followers of Mohammed, the Mussulmans, think of heaven as a beautiful garden where bloom all the most lovely of flowers and where flow the most beautiful of streams. And isn't that just the picture which John gives us of heaven? A lovely city with a great park in the center, through which flows the river of the water of life and where

the tree of life is blooming constantly. After that beautiful resurrection morning, Jesus went up through the heavens into the heavenly paradise of God. And he tells us that he is the keeper of that garden. "I go to prepare a place for you."

Fourth.—Then I think Jesus is a gardener because he keeps the garden of rest and peace. A garden in the East is a type of restfulness. The gardens were filled with shade trees and flowers, beautiful grasses and fountains and ponds. Here men went in the cool of the day or even in the midst of its noontide heat to rest. You remember how Christ saw Nathanael when he was under the fig tree resting in the heat of the day.

The Master who rose from the dead has prepared peace and comfort and rest for those that come to him. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Now his resurrection on that Easter morning proves to us that all the promises he made are true. For the greatest promise—that of his rising—has been fulfilled, and so we are at liberty to believe all the others he made us.

So, when he tells us we may come into his garden of rest, we can accept the invitation and go. How we love to creep away from the heat of the hot city in summer time and get into the shade of some little garden. So Jesus says when we are weary and oppressed, we can come to him and he has provided a place of comfort.

"When my soul is faint and thirsty,
'Neath the shadow of his wings
There is cool and pleasant shelter
And a fresh and crystal spring."

Fifth.—He is the gardener because he raises flowers that we can plant in our cemeteries to make gardens out of them. How we love to decorate the graves of our dead. If you go into the cemeteries in June they look just like rose gardens. But these flowers are only types of the real flowers we plant on a Christian's grave.

Jesus, the gardener, had some flowers growing in that garden in Jerusalem that were the real flowers of blessing to plant in our cemeteries. Here are some of them. There is the flower of hope. That grew out of Jesus' tomb. Before that time men had hopelessly laid their dear ones in the grave. But now we know that we may live again because he lives. Then there is the flower of faith. We need never fear that he in whom we believed will fail, after he has conquered death. We can say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And he said we should see our dear ones again. Then there is the flower of recognition. We fear sometimes we shall not know our dear ones in heaven.

But Jesus knew Mary, and Mary at last knew Jesus.

We have this blessed assurance that just as Mary knew Jesus, not so much by his outward appearance as his voice and manner, so though our bodily form shall be changed we shall know each other.

I have in my hand a lily bulb. If I plant it, I shall get something so beautiful and sweet that it has nothing of the old dirty, rough bulb about it, but I shall not hesitate to say it is a lily, and I shall recognize it at once. So when the great Gardener plants us in the Christian's grave, we shall come forth in such manner that all those who have known the seed will recognize the flower.

Sixth.—Then lastly I think we can think of Jesus as a gardener because it is he alone that plants in us the seed that will give us eternal life. "In him was life," says John. It was the life that he received from God, his Father, that brought him as a flower from the grave where they had buried his body. By that life that God put in him he came forth from the grave, to be the first fruits of them that sleep.

That life Jesus puts in each of us who accepts him. It is that germ of eternal life that gives us hope of rising.

I hold in my hand a seed, dry and apparently lifeless. Yet I can plant it with the assurance that it will send forth its tiny shoot and finally blossom. Seeds have been found in mummy cases in Egypt that were old in the days of Moses,

but when planted have put out roots and grown green. And every little seed has this persevering germ of life. Once that mighty oak tree was a little speck so small that you could not see it without the microscope. Now if we love Jesus, he puts his life in us and that life that he put in us can never be destroyed. He, like the gardener, will cultivate and keep it alive, and when we are put into the grave that bit of Christ's life will be powerful enough to break the grave and bring us forth.

Here is a story to show you what I mean.

An infidel German countess, more than a century ago, when dying, ordered that her grave should be covered with a solid granite slab; that around this should be placed solid rocks, and that the whole should be clamped together with iron bands. And she had this inscription put on the stone, "This burial place, purchased to all eternity, must not be opened." A little seed however, sprouted inside the tomb, pushed its tiny shoots out through a crack and gradually growing burst the iron clamps and lifted the immense block. Such a seed of life has the Gardener planted in the hearts of those who will accept him and love him. So for all these reasons I think Mary was right that day after all, and that she supposed nothing but the truth.

Jesus is the keeper of our soul garden and some day he will bring us full of blooms and beauty into his palace.

"GETTING ONTO HIS CURVES"

Text—Eph. 6:11.
Objects—A baseball and bat.

My Dear Boys:

The baseball season is upon us and the fever is burning in the breasts of every manly boy of us. I must confess that we preachers are not proof against this dread infection that comes with the robins and the hand organs. And if we made a frank confession to you fellows, we would tell you that we long sometimes to get away from the odor of our library shelves, and get out with the boys on the diamond.

I presume that every boy has been saving up for bat and ball and studying the pedigree of every new player on the professional teams. The latest news that has come to me from the diamond is that some one has invented a brand new curve, that is going to puzzle the batters this year and win glory for its inventor. That recalls to me the days when before most of you were born, we used to sit by the hour and discuss the weighty question whether or not a baseball could be made to curve, while I have spent many hours, as a boy, trying to throw a ball between two upright poles planted at about twenty yards apart.

To-day we know that most games of baseball have come to be pitchers' battles.

Now Satan our great adversary is engaged in a mighty struggle with every man of you, and he is depending upon throwing curved balls over your home plate. Paul talks to us in this letter to the Ephesians about the "wiles" of the Devil. But if Paul knew baseball as well as he did boxing he would have told you to beware of the "curves" of the Devil. Instead of saying "beware of the wiles of the Devil" he would have said "get onto the Devil's curves," for his wiles are his curves and his curves are his wiles. There is little that is straight about our enemy Satan. He never fights in the open. He uses curves and deceit. He never throws a straight ball.

Yes, boys, and girls too, you must become familiar with the methods of the evil one lest he take you unawares.

First of all Satan is so knowing. For six thousand years, and nobody living knows how many more, he has been going up and down this world practicing every kind of curved device and crooked business that he might put you out of the game of life. And you can begin your battle with him confident that he knows far more than you. Beware! Then he can make things appear other than they are. You remember how through the influences of Satan the Egyptian magicians could make their sticks seem like snakes after Moses had by God's

help made his rod turn into a real snake. He has ever gone about blinding the eyes of the men and women of this world to the truth. He is called the "Father of Lies," that "Old Serpent," "The Deceiver."

In the northeast corner of the great Yellowstone Park there is a gloomy ravine which is known as Death Gulch. At the foot of the mountain slopes there is a stream impregnated with sulphate of alumina, which is death to all animal life. A recent visitor saw there a number of bears lying dead about this stream, having been killed by drinking the water. Sin has its Death Gulch, and how many men and women, and boys and girls too, are first fascinated, and then killed by its fatal stream. It seems to invite them, but it means to blind and slay.

Satan never comes in his true form. For this reason we must be doubly watchful. He comes often disguised as an angel of light. An old Scotchman gazing once at Ary Schaefer's picture of the Temptation of the Master, which represents Satan in a peculiarly repulsive form, said, "If Satan had come to me in that form I would have given him his death blow too." But the unfortunate part of it all is that he does not. To Eve he came in the insinuating and sneaking method of the snake. There is a pretty little plant that grows on the moors of England called the sundew. Its leaves are soft and velvety and attract the insects to

them, but are filled with tiny hairs which when touched cause the plant to close up, and the luckless insect becomes a victim of the sundew's wiles. So does Satan attract us.

We must remember last of all that none has ever been able, among the strongest of the sons of men, unaided, to resist him. Noah, Lot, Abraham, Moses, Peter, all have fallen a prey to the wiles of the Devil.

But there is One who knows him thoroughly. The Master of men is the Master of Satan. "In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Let the Master teach you, and help you that when Satan throws his curves over your home plate, you won't strike out.

LESSONS OF THE TARGET

Object—A target such as is used for air rifles or archery.

My Dear Young Soldiers:

You will all recognize this thing which I hold in my hand. Many times have Bill and Jim tried for the bull's-eye in a target like this. Do not be satisfied till you hit it, boys.

One of the presidents of the London Chamber of Commerce once wrote out these two principles of success:

1. Have a definite aim.
2. Go straight for it.

Dr. Henry van Dyke has written:

> Life is an arrow, therefore you must know
> What mark to aim at, how to use the bow.
> Then draw it to the head, and let it go.

Let us look a moment at those two principles of the target.

First.—*Have a definite aim.* If I were to select for you one of the mightiest epoch-making events in history, I think I should choose that moment when the great Apostle Paul said on the Damascus road, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Or better still a scene in the temple at Jerusalem, when the young Jesus said to his anxious parents, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Or better still the moment when that

same Jesus stood before Pilate and said, "For to this end came I into the world." For both Jesus and Paul had a definite aim in their lives that changed the world. The sad thing about so many young lives is that they are going on without a definite aim. Not so the great men. You remember well what Columbus, amid all the discouragement of that voyage of his to America, wrote in his diary: "That day we sailed . . . westward, *which was our course.*" Keeping everlastingly at our work is not enough. We must have a goal toward which we are going, a target toward which we aim the arrow of life. Amos R. Wells tells us that he once saw a sign in England that read, "T. Baffin, dealer in anything and everything." I fear Mr. Baffin never got very rich or prominent.

Do you sturdy young fellows know where you are marching to? Do you dear girls know toward what you are going? I hope it is toward a consecrated Christian life.

Second.—*Go straight for it.* "Then draw it to the head"—says Dr. Van Dyke. Pull your arm way back, let that arrow fly as if you meant it to reach its mark. Plan your work, and then work your plan. Benjamin Franklin once said, "Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve." Be like John Hay's Jim Bludsoe—"He seen his duty a dead sure thing, an' went for it thar and then."

Don't ever be satisfied till you hit that bull's-eye; till the bell rings. Now Paul's mark was Jesus. "I press toward the mark for the high calling of Jesus," he tells us. There is no higher and better. Aim to be a true Christian. Don't be satisfied with anything less.

Remember that to miss that mark is to sin. Not all sin is transgression. Paul's idea of sin was also expressed in the Greek word "hamartano" which literally means to miss the mark, to come short. To come short of a Christian life, my dear young soldiers, is to sin—to be found faulty. Aim high then to-day. Take Jesus and a Christian life as the target toward which your arrow of life is directed, and then pull, pull, till you can pull no more and let it fly. And some day when you go to look, you will find that arrow-life of yours sunk deep and firm into the life of Christ.

THREE FLOWERS OF FREEDOM

Objects—A rose, a Mayflower and a lily.

My Dear Young Soldiers of the Cross:

I have brought you to-day a Memorial-Day bouquet. For to-morrow we shall observe that beautiful custom of placing flowers on the graves of the soldiers who have died defending the flag, or in the service of this country. The custom which we all remember from childhood, originated in the South after the war when the southern women carried flowers out to lay on the Confederate graves. And it was taken up soon by all the states of the Union. The date of May 30 was decided upon because that day marked the mustering out of the last soldier of the Civil War, when North and South were at last at peace.

Tradition has it that "after the last battle fought in England in behalf of the Stuarts there sprang up on the spot on Culloden Moor a singular blue flower unknown in that region before. The natives call it the 'flower of Culloden,' because it sprang from the soil made sacred with the blood of their kin. They believed that seeds that had been long unfruitful, lying sleeping in the ground, when watered by the blood of the braves sprang suddenly into life and grew and bloomed." But they were

costly flowers, were they not? These flowers that you will lay upon the graves of the soldier dead of our great Republic will be flowers like those of Culloden. Flowers of sacrifice. Flowers that are due to bloodshed.

I hold in my hand three such flowers, three flowers of freedom, that have always cost the shedding of blood. They are the flowers of sacrifice.

First.—Here is the beautiful red rose. Its color speaks of blood. It is the flower of national liberty. Such liberty is costly always. Its price is always sacrifice, and some one has had to pour out life's blood, and some hearts have had to break before liberty ever came to a nation or to its people. I suppose most of you boys and girls have been out to Valley Forge and seen the graves of the Continental soldiers who died of hunger and privation in that awful winter, and have been able to fancy you could see the footmarks of blood near the sentry houses.

Those of you that have read your American histories know that there were three hundred and sixty thousand brave men killed in the Civil War. The red rose of freedom has grown out of blood. We should value it so highly that never, never should we carelessly throw it away.

Second.—Then here is the pale blue Mayflower, the flower of religious liberty. Was it not singular that those who traveled the high seas years ago to find in this land of ours religious freedom should

have come in a ship called the "Mayflower." That little flower whose blue speaks to us of constancy, and truth, and sincerity, and whose energy in pushing out of the snow of winter to give us its beauty and fragrance is so typical of the loyalty, and courage of our Pilgrim fathers. True blue is this little flower. And this flower of religious liberty cost something. Isn't it strange, young people, that one should have to purchase the freedom to worship God with one's blood. And yet it has so often been true. From the days of the Christian martyrs in the Colosseum at Rome to the days of the Scotch men and women who lost their lives for their faith in the days of the Covenanters, it has been necessary at times to buy one's right to worship God as they willed at the price of blood. It is a lesson to us to value the freedom we have of worship and make use of that freedom.

Third.—And lastly here is the pure white lily. This is also a flower of freedom. It represents to us to-day the freedom from sin and all uncleanness, which was purchased by our blessed Saviour when he shed his life's blood on the cross. This lily of freedom from sin grew up pure and spotless and fragrant at the foot of the cross of the Master. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Sin is slavery. He that committeth sin is the slave of sin, says the Bible. And we are not too young to have felt that slavery. But it also tells

us that "If the Son shall make you free, ye are free indeed." And he made us free from sin by his blood.

Memorial Day brings us the lessons of sacrifice. Here are the red, white and blue,—the flowers of true liberty, liberty of citizenship, liberty of religion, freedom from sin. And they all cost something called blood—and blood is the life. So then let us treasure them as never before.

INVISIBLE ENEMIES

Object—A microscope or magnifying glass.

My Dear Juniors:

One day last week I heard a boy say, "What you don't know, won't hurt you." It is a poor kind of philosophy, for some of the things we know least about hurt us most. So also is it with the things we see. When I was a little shaver, I used to pull the bedclothes about my head as mother turned down the light, believing, as the ostrich believes, that what I did not see would not hurt me.

There was once a great English scientist who put some water from the dirty, though sacred, River Ganges under a microscope, and then, calling a high caste Brahmin, let him look through and see all the horrible infusoria and microbes of disease that swarmed in it. But the Brahmin, used to bathing in these holy waters and terrified by what he saw, broke the microscope and went on bathing as before. He believed that what one does not see is harmless.

What I wish to tell you to-day is that it is the very things that one does not see that are the most harmful.

If we were traveling through the jungles of Africa we would be always on the lookout for tigers, but would be utterly careless of the harm-

less mosquito. When we were boys we often heard it said in reference to another's want of courage—"Oh, he's afraid of a mosquito." But that is no longer a sign of cowardice, but of common sense, for the innocent looking mosquito is far more terrible than the roaring tiger. And the greatest men of science to-day have come to be in constant terror of the mosquito, because he carries the dreaded germ of yellow fever.

It is a queer thing, is it not, that the more invisible things are the more terrible and dangerous do they come to be. A wild tiger is not so dangerous as a common house fly, because we can see the tiger and we cannot always see the fly, and the fly can carry typhoid fever enough with him to kill an army.

There are some things that are invisible to the naked eye, like the tiny microbes, that we can see through the microscope, and shun them. But there are still more terrible things we cannot see even through the microscope. And the smaller and more invisible they are the more dangerous do they seem to be.

No one yet even with the most powerful microscope has seen the microbes or germs, as we best know them, of the three terrible and fatal diseases of hydrophobia, of yellow fever, or of poliomyelitis, which is a big word for a sort of spinal meningitis. One noted professor tells us that he believes the eye is not constructed that will ever see them.

Yet these three things are more fatal, and carry off more lives than all the tigers and lions of India.

So it is the little things after all which we cannot see that are to be the most feared.

Now let us get our lesson. You boys and girls cannot see the harm in staying out late at night, and so you believe there is no such harm. But mother and father have been looking through the microscope, called their experience, and they have seen the harm. It is too bad you cannot see it, but you will some day and you must take their word.

You boys cannot see the harm, perhaps, that lurks in the evil-smelling cigarette, but it is there, the doctors have found it. It is more dangerous than wild beasts. You cannot always see why you should not stay away from church and why mother insists on your coming here. But there is a danger every time you stay away from God's house. Those who have wandered away from God have seen it and can tell you. So let others be your microscopes, and believe what they say when they tell you that there are a hundred and one things the harm of which you cannot see, and beware of them lest they spoil your young lives.

HOW TO TELL POISONS

Text—I Thess. 5 : 21. "Prove all things."
Objects—A piece of poison ivy and Virginia creeper, a mushroom and a toadstool.

My Dear Young Naturalists:

I have with me to-day some of nature's products with which we are all familiar. This piece of vine which I am holding is the Virginia creeper that climbs over the porches and fences and stone walls, and this other piece which you will see I am holding with a glove-covered hand is very similar, and yet essentially different. And the fact that I hold it with a gloved hand shows us that it is a dangerous bit of leaf. It is the poison ivy from which so many of us have suffered at one time or another. And this object which I now hold up is a mushroom, one of the most delectable articles of food for the epicures. The other looks just like it, but looks are deceitful, and we must not be deceived because he looks like his cousin. This other fellow is quite a different character. Should we eat him, I fear we would miss church services for some days to come, and perhaps we should miss them forever. It is the toadstool. Only this past summer fifteen persons in New York City died from eating toadstools in mistake for mushrooms. Now the important

thing is to know these fellows apart. It seems that they resemble one another perfectly, and yet there is a most marked difference. The difference between the poison ivy and the Virginia creeper is that the poison ivy has but three fingers and the creeper has five. You can always tell it if you know the difference of those two fingers. And as to the mushrooms, you will always find that he has a solid stem, that the under portion of his umbrella is pink, and that you can peel the outer skin off. While his cousin, the toadstool, is generally of hollow stem, has a white umbrella and you cannot peel the top off. God has put these differences between the hurtful and the helpful, and if we would live our lives in comfort and yet enjoy God's provision for us in nature, we must be careful to know these differences which exist.

There are in like manner habits and methods of living of which these several objects are illustrations.

These habits and methods of life seem all alike to many. They have an innocent look to those who are not watchful and we are apt to be deceived and poisoned by them.

What I want you to remember is, that as in the case of the things I have shown you, *the difference, while seemingly slight, can always be detected.* And it is our business, boys and girls, to detect it before we get poisoned by them.

These differences are generally in some little

matter that it takes a good clear eye to see, and one that has practiced seeing such things to avoid them. There is something there that ought not to be there, or there is something not there that ought to be there, that makes the difference, and renders one harmful and the other helpful.

God has given us an eye to see just these differences in pleasures, and habits and ways of doing things, and that eye we call "conscience." If you were going out hunting for mushrooms you would have your eyes "peeled" as we say; keen and watchful to see the difference between mushroom and toadstool. And if you were getting over a wall you would be watchful to see if the pretty vine growing upon it had five fingers or three. So must the eye of our conscience be bright and constantly on the watch for these differences between good and bad.

In chemistry they use a paper called "litmus" which put in acid instantly determines its acidity. The jeweler has his touchstone for determining gold. So conscience determines in the pleasures and habits of our lives the good and the bad. In the bank of England there is a machine that with unerring accuracy weighs the coin throwing out those which are under weight. Just so our consciences tell us the differences, however slight they may be, between the good and the bad. Some of the things we like in life and should not have, look just like things we like and may have. We

must follow our conscience carefully. We must get to know the difference between playing golf and playing golf on God's holy day.

We must come to know the difference between a Christmas cantata and a cheap vaudeville show in a theater.

You must see the difference between saying "let's pretend" when you are playing, and "let's pretend" when mother has asked you a point blank question that demands the truth.

Conscience will tell you all these differences if you will follow it and keep it without offense. For the aim of us all should be with Paul to try always to have "a conscience void of offense before God and man." Prove all things, Juniors, for you have the proof in your own hearts where God has placed it for your safety.

Do not eat anything until you have proved it good for your body.

And do not do anything until you have proved it good for your soul.

BUBBLE HONORS

Text—Hosea 10 : 7; Ps. 91 : 14.

Objects—A soap bubble pipe and some water for blowing bubbles.

I wonder how many of you boys and girls before me to-day ever wished that you were kings or queens or at least princes and princesses? You are not much like the general run of boys and girls if you haven't sometime or other curled yourselves up in father's big armchair and with your fairy book on your knees wished that you, too, might sit on a royal throne and dictate orders to men- and women-in-waiting and never, never go to bed until you wanted to.

How we all are looking for honors! How we love to be even in the company of great men! How our young bosoms swell with pride if only we can shake hands with some great one! Why, I remember even to-day the swellings of boyish pride with which I shook hands once with General Burnside, and heard him say to father, "That boy has a good grip." Or how grand we feel when some noted man or woman answers a little letter that we have written him or her!

But here is a king to whom all kinds of honors are due, and yet Hosea the Prophet tells him that his honors are like a bubble upon the waters. I want

to speak to you to-day young people on "Bubble Honors" and as I blow this airy bubble look well at it.

See first—*how pretty*, how attractive a thing it is. Reflecting all the colors of the rainbow, it mirrors all the beauties of this room in which we are.

But see now—*how empty* a thing it is. I prick it with this pin and—splutter!—it is gone. Gone where? Into the empty air from whence it came; for it is after all but a breath. Ages ago a very wise and thoughtful man wrote in the pages of this blessed Bible we study, "Vanity of vanities, . . . all is vanity," and if you could read the language in which that was written you would see that what the great wise man said was this, "A breath of breaths, all being but breath." He was speaking of the honors of the world.

I wonder if you ever read that pretty story of the little beggar who changed places with the little prince, and how sick and tired that little beggar grew of the fuss and feathers of the royal court, and how anxious he was to get back to the gutter. Now notice also that these bubbles are—*blown up with wind.* The wind that blows up some honors that men have is often their own. They blow themselves up with pride and self praise until they often burst. Æsop tells us in his fables of the frog who wanted to be as large as the bull, and he puffed and puffed his little self until he burst.

And sometimes these honors are blown up for us by our friends. There was always room in the great Greek Pantheon, or temple of all the gods, for any deity who had followers enough to erect his statue there. And generally you can find some one who will praise you.

But we find at last that these bubble honors are *easily burst*, and short-lived.

What then are the honors that last? They are named in the ninety-first Psalm, "Because he hath set his love upon me, . . . I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." It is the King of kings who is speaking of those of you that love him. He will set you "on high," and he will answer you. How nice to get an answer from a great man.

Here is an answer from the King of kings: "I will honor him." He whom God honors is honored indeed.

The honors that God gives are permanent. We prick the bubble and the "bubble honor," and both return to the air. But the Father says, "With long life will I satisfy him." The little kings of China and Persia will keep their honors at longest but about sixty years, and like most monarchs will not be satisfied. But you little kings, who are God's children will have an eternity of glory. "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."

THE THREE SIEVES

Text—Ps. 39 : 1.

Objects—Three sieves with tags appended reading respectfully, "Is it true?" "Is it kind?" "Is it necessary?"

My Dear Juniors:

To-day as I came into the church I heard a group of the young ladies of our Junior Congregation talking together about another young lady of this same Congregation, and from what I could gather the remarks were not altogether complimentary. And I wondered if the remarks of these young ladies in question could be put through the three sieves. Now you are already guessing what those three sieves are. They are the sieves through which all our tales of others should be made to pass before we repeat them. For just as flour is sifted again and again before it is fit to go out into our homes and be made into nourishing bread, so must our tales about others be sifted, before they are fit to be retold and made public property.

Learn then, my dear Juniors, to put all such tales about others through the three sieves which I shall show you. If they fail to pass through, then never tell them. Lock them up in the secret places of your hearts and memories and put a ball and chain on them lest they should escape and do much harm. The first sieve is that which bears the label "Is it true?"

"Oh, mother, "cried Mabel, "I heard such a tale of Edith Howard, I never knew she was such an old sneaking"—

"My dear," replied her mother, "Go get the sieve number one, and let us see if it will go through."

"Yes," said Mabel, "it will. Nellie Jones told me all about it and she saw her do it."

"Well," said mother,"try the next one." (Hold up sieve whose label reads, "Is it kind?")

Now, Juniors, what do you think Mabel found? Would it pass that sieve or not? There are times when it is kindness to tell people of their faults. But it is scarcely ever kind to tell others about them.

But if Mabel had succeeded in getting her story through the second sieve, would it ever have gotten through the third? (Sieve with label reading, "Is it necessary?")

Is it ever necessary to tell tales of others? Sometimes, but very seldom. And never for the mere pleasure of telling a tale. And never unless the tale will pass through the three tests which we have assigned them to-day. David knew what sorrow comes into tender hearts and how much disgrace is brought on the name of God by children of his that tell useless and unkind tales of others. And so he wrote, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked are before me."

THE LION, THE BEAR AND THE SERPENT

Text—Amos 5 : 19. "As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him."

Objects—Large pictures of lion, bear, and snake.

My Dear Churchgoers:

Here is a funny text. You didn't know it was in the Bible, did you? Well, you are not more ignorant than the grown people here this morning, because they did not know it either, most of them.

I have here in my hand a large picture of a lion, a bear and a serpent, which correspond to the three animals mentioned in this peculiar text. There is a tale of a traveler which I heard when I was a boy that has stayed with me ever since and which I hope will stay with you also. This traveler was going, in his journey, through a thick wood, when a huge bear sprang out at him, but raising his trusty rifle to his shoulder he brought him to the ground and hurried on. Shortly he heard the howling of wolves and looking behind saw that he was pursued. Digging the spurs into his steed he took to rapid flight. But the wolves soon caught up and he felt that it would not be long until they would pull him from the saddle to his death. Rising in his stirrups he fired at the leader and brought him down. Thereupon the

other members of the pack fell to eating the dead, and he escaped.

Rejoicing in his prowess in making this double escape from bear and wolves, he rolled himself up in his blanket and lay down to sleep, when a serpent that had coiled itself in the folds of his blanket stung him to death.

Now this is the same kind of story that Amos is telling us here. You may escape two great evils to be destroyed by a third that you never dream of, or which you think too weak and innocent to harm you. This man by his swift running has escaped the lion,—which in Bible times was supposed to be exceedingly swift and to attack its prey only in the open,—and, feeling himself safe, has gone carelessly along his way. But the bear, which is supposed to be like our fox in his cunning, lurks behind the bushes and darts out at him as he passes by. By careful dodging he eludes the bear and gains the safety of his own home. Panting and tired, yet feeling perfectly secure, he leans for rest against the wall of his home—safe, safe, at last. But just then a slimy, treacherous snake crawls lazily out of the cracks in the wall and stings him, and he dies.

Now I am wondering how many of you boys and girls have caught the lesson. It is this—that not for a moment must you believe that because you do not murder, or steal, or lie, or swear, that you are safe. The little serpent of bad temper or

thoughtlessness may get you yet. Don't you remember how in the fairy stories the old witch always kept changing from a horrid beast into a lovely maiden, and from a lovely maiden into a horrid beast?

So it is that Satan changes, and if you think you have gotten away from him because you have escaped the old lion of cruelty, beware that you do not find the old bear deceit lying about somewhere. Or if you have managed to elude him, don't think you can always escape the old snake of falsehood.

It is the "little foxes that spoil the vines," and it is the little sins that after all trip us up. Watch out, boys, for little sins. Watch out, girls, for little faults. Notice that it was in this man's own house that the serpent got him. It is in your own hearts that these little sins lie. And they are all the more dangerous because we do not at once recognize them as sins.

WEIGHING HEARTS

Text—Job 31 : 6.
Objects—A pair of toy scales and if possible a scarabæus.

My Dear Young Christians:

I have before me to-day one object that you are familiar with, and one with which you are not familiar. The first you will quickly recognize as a pair of toy scales such as you use in playing "store."

The other is a scarab or sacred beetle cut out of stone and taken from the tomb of an Egyptian. These scarabs were considered to be emblems of immortality and were supposed to grant to the person holding them in their hands after death a safe entrance into the other world.

In the British Museum there are hundreds of these scarabs, and all of them are engraved with some emblem, the translation of which is written on a tin tablet below. One of these inscriptions reads thus, "A prayer that the weighing of the heart of the possessor in the Hall of Double Justice, before the guardian of the scales, may be found satisfactory."

This struck me as peculiar and I began to study the matter. I found that the Egyptians taught that after death the person was conducted into

the Hall of Truth and Righteousness by the god Anubis and that there were seated about the hall forty-two accusers who would accuse the person of forty-two terrible crimes. These he had to deny, and in order to be sure that he told the truth they did this remarkable thing, boys and girls,—they weighed his heart. In the one side of the scale they put his heart, and in the other the symbol for truth. If the weighing was satisfactory his heart was restored to his body and he went to heaven. If not, and his heart was under weight, he was fed as a dainty meal to the hippopotamus that guarded the heavenly gardens. How funny it seems to weigh a fellow's heart, doesn't it? Yet that is just what Job is talking about in our text. "Let me be weighed in an even balance that God may know mine integrity."

That is what the writer of Proverbs meant when he said, "The ways of a man are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits."

Think what wonderfully accurate scales God must have. In one place we are told he weighs mountains in his balances and in this place that he weighs such an airy, filmy nothing as spirit.

Men are able to make wonderful scales such as that in the mint where they can weigh from tons down to the millionth part of an ounce, but no man ever could weigh the heart of a man. God alone weighs that, and he weighs it in the scales with truth, boys. We do not like the idea much of

being measured up with truth, but our hearts are constantly in God's scale.

There was a man in the olden days named Belshazzar, whose heart was weighed. You recall that story—how in the midst of the feast he saw a hand writing upon the wall, "Mene, mene, tekel upharsin,"—thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Now then—if this is all true, and we want to have hearts that weigh right in the day of God's judging, the best thing we can do is to weigh our hearts each day with truth in the other side of the scale. Let us check them up every hour of the day. How is it now? Are you telling truth now? Are you living truly now? Have you boys any secrets under those manly breasts of yours that you dare not tell father? Have you girls any treasures in your hearts that you would rather not show mother?

Put your heart into the scale with truth to-day and then check up the balance daily and you will find that if you are honest to-day there will not be much trouble by and by.

Shall we not all be willing to pray the prayer of the Psalmist—"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

THE DANGEROUS SHADOW

Text—Eph. 5 : 8.

My Dear "Children of Light":

One day this summer while we were traveling from Siena to Rome in hot and dusty Italy, the train suddenly put on brakes and stopped hurriedly just after we had passed an arch of a bridge over the railroad track. Everyone either got out or looked out, and noticed that the train crew were running wildly,—and gesticulating as they ran,—toward the bridge from under which we had just come. And looking back over the short distance across the tracks vibrating with the heat we saw a poor fellow lying bleeding beside the roadbed with a party of dazed and excited Italians gathered about him. Everyone was excited and all gesticulated as the Italians will. But one poor fellow with blue overalls seemed to be more unnerved than all the rest. He ran about wringing his hands and crying in his native tongue, "He was in the shadow and I did not see him." "He was in the shadow and I did not see him." True enough he was, for the poor unfortunate had been lying in the shadow of the bridge resting from his morning's toil in the heat, and the engineer, because of the dense shadow of the archway and the blinding sunlight that was all about, did not see him and ran

him down. They picked him up tenderly and laid him in the coach, but the doctor, who happened to be on the train, gave us little hope that he would live. At every station the excited engineer got out and cried to all who passed by, "He was in the shadow and I did not see him." The shadow was a comfortable but a mighty dangerous place to be. Boys and girls, it always is. Most of the evil that is done in the world is done in the shadow. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light," and "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

The burglar creeps into one's home under the shadow of early morning just before day. The drunkard staggers home in the darkness.

We are coming to hate the evil shadow so greatly in our cities, that each year we are erecting more light poles. This last year the city in which we live set nearly a thousand new lamps blazing along its main streets believing that one electric light that drives away the shadows is better than a dozen policemen.

The shadow means dangers to you boys and girls. When God's people Israel wanted to commit idolatry, they sought out the shadows under the green trees upon the hill tops. And when to-day the crooked business man does business in a way that you children would say wasn't "fair," we talk about his "shady" operations. When you

chaps want to do wrong, you get in the shadow. In the shadow of the barn some of the older boys here to-day smoked their first cigarette, and their sons do the same thing, if they have not learned better about these cigarettes.

Where did you go after you had bought that miserable book that you did not dare to let mother see? Off into the haymow of the barn, if you lived in the country—in the shadow.

In the shadow of the schoolhouse you girls got together to talk over that new girl that just came to school, and said things and did things that you would have been ashamed to do openly. And sometimes when a boy gets older the shadow is the shadow of a corner grocery store, or the back room of a cigar store or pool room. And then by and by the shadow he looks for is the shadow of the saloon's swinging door. Then it is the shadow of the dark alley, and in that shadow he learns to commit crime,—until the shadow of the prison covers him.

Yes, the shadow is a bad place for a boy or a girl. How careful we ought to be to heed Paul's words, "Walk as children of light." For God is light. There is no shadow with him. All things are open in the eye of our heavenly Father. The darkness and the light are both alike to him. One of the most useful texts of Scripture I ever learned, was this, "Thou God seest me." Look out for the shadow, Juniors, and walk in the light.

BACK IN HARNESS

Text—James 3 : 3. "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us."

Object—A bridle, or piece of harness.

My Dear Young Christians:

This week will see vacation close and the school doors open and you will be getting back to work. I have tried to get a topic to-day that would help you to go back in good spirits and with a willingness to do your best.

I have brought you to-day as our object this bit and bridle, and our text says, "Behold we put bits in the horses' mouths," and then tells us why. I wonder if in our vacation days in the country, on the farm, we have seen a horse turned out to pasture. How happy he is to get the harness off and how he jumps, and whinnies, and rolls in the soft clover. But the day comes when he must get back to work. And how he dislikes that. The farmer has to get a measure with some salt, or a wisp of hay and go to the fence rail and coax and call, and then quickly slip the halter on, or the bridle. It will be some days before the farmer can get that horse to work well. He will want to go into every field he sees.

So is it with you boys and girls and with us grown-ups. All summer you have been "turned out to

grass." The schoolroom doors have been closed. The books all set aside and you have been running wild. Now the school bell will soon sound and the factory whistles will blow and we shall all know that it is time to get back to work.

We call it "getting back into harness." Duty becomes our master again, and hitches us up again in the harness—ties us once more to our regular tasks. This week the teacher will come to the schoolroom door with the harness in her hand and call you back. You will put on the harness again and be tied up to books and lessons all winter.

Rather hard isn't it? Some of us older folks find it so.

But the harness has its blessed uses for the horse, and for you also. What does the harness do for the horse?

First.—It teaches him obedience. We put harnesses on the horses, and bits in their mouths, says our text, "that they may obey us." The greatest lesson of life, boys and girls, is obedience. When you have learned that, you can learn almost anything. And we go to school to learn that. The horse cannot be of use unless he learns to follow the rein. Neither can the boy or girl. Some time ago in one of the European countries, a switch tender on the railroad, saw his little boy playing on the tracks where a fast train was coming. He could not leave the switch to go after the child, and he could not throw the train

on another track without great loss of life. So he called to the boy loudly, "Lie down!" The little fellow had early learned obedience, and so, instantly, he lay down and the great train passed over him without giving him even a scratch.

Second.—Then the harness gives the horse a chance to be useful, and to put his great powers and strength to service. Without the harness that ties him to his work, he would waste his strength. We do not like to be tied to work, but it is the only way our youthful strength will become of use. We talk about harnessing the great Falls of Niagara. And men have done it so that the great body of water is doing work for the world to-day in running great factories and making light for distant cities. We have harnessed steam, and gas, and electricity, and gasoline, and now the air, and made them useful. You boys and girls are carrying about with you a pressure of youthful strength—about one hundred and fifty pounds to the square inch. If you get "hitched up" to some definite duty that will count for good.

Third.—Then the harness is the horse's safety, and having a regular duty is your safety also. In olden days the word "harness" meant the armor which the knight put upon his horse and himself to protect them from the arrows and spears of the enemy. The harness to-day keeps the horse out of mischief. It keeps him in the road and keeps him busy.

Our school tasks keep our minds busy so that they are not filled with harmful things. There was a story in *The Ram's Horn* about a boy whose report had been below the average in school and his father noticed a number of dime novels in his son's room. He said nothing about them but when the lad came in he said, "Take this basket of apples, turn the apples out and fill the basket with chips." The boy returned the basket partly filled. "Now," said his father, "put the apples back into the basket."

The boy tried but found that the fruit rolled out as fast as he could put it in. "I can't do it, father, the basket is half full of chips." "Exactly so" said his parent, "and how can you fill your mind with useful learning when you have it more than half full of rubbish?" Being at school and being faithful to our studies keeps us safe.

Then, last of all remember that Jesus talked about harness, for the ox-yokes of Jesus' day were the harnesses of the times. He said, "Take my yoke of obedience and learn of me and you shall find rest." Jesus wants us to work, but as we work, he wants us to know that he works with us and will give us rest in the midst of our toil.

"KEYED UP"

Text—Luke 12 : 35.
Objects—A sash or girdle and small lamp.

My Dear Juniors:

I have here to-day for our object lesson, a girdle such as is worn in the East, and a small lamp such as used to be carried in the days of Jesus. Both of these figure in the picture of watchmen which Jesus has drawn in our text. The lord of the mansion has gone out for the evening and has left these men to await his coming. Possibly he has been on a journey into the country and is weary, and dusty and desires a feet washing or a hot supper, and moreover, as the ways were dark in those dark days and no brilliant street lamps illumined the way, it would be necessary for the servants to have the lamp lighted to guide him in the narrow street along which he came to his home. The girdle was worn around the waist and when service was required the loose outer garment was caught up and made fast with it and the man was unincumbered and better fit to wait upon his lord. Beside that there would be the strengthening of the body-making the service easier. The man with loins girt and lamp lighted was as we say "keyed up" to the moment when his master should require him. When God prepared his

people to go out of Egypt he ordered that as their going was to be sudden, their loins were to be girt about and their shoes were to be upon their feet and their staves in their hands. There would be no time to do it after the summons came.

Jesus wants to teach us that it is necessary for a Christian to be always "keyed up" and "girt about."

Every spring and fall you notice that father has the piano "tuned up." When a violinist begins to play he first has to "tune up" that instrument of his; and a most nerve racking procedure it often is.

Now we find that the aviator has to "tune up" his biplane, by tightening every wire, before he dares to attempt a flight.

I often wonder how the lighthouse keepers stand the strain of their hard life, for they are obliged to keep their lights and the machinery that runs them, up to the top notch of perfection, or the lights might fail and men lose their lives along the shore.

This is what Jesus meant when he said that we were to be like watchmen with their loins tied up tight—constantly vigilant and ready.

You know what that means—you boys know. Did you ever go to see a series of professional baseball games, when there were two runs on either side in the ninth inning and three men on bases, and two out and the strongest hitter at the bat?

Watch those infielders—they are keyed up, they have their loins girt and their lamps lighted, they are "on the job." Well, that is the condition in which Jesus wants every child of his to be. Eternal vigilance is not only "the price of liberty," as we write in our copy books, but the price of everything.

Now some of us are loosely tied together. The other day in Cincinnati they published a list of things that had become loose in the mails and been lost to their owners. Among the long list were watch chain, cuff buttons, tooth brush, set of teaspoons, bracelet, earrings, pocket knife, brush, bundle of iron, brass lock, box of pills, set of false teeth, bicycle sprocket wheel, door keys, box of salve, comb, and no end of small coins of silver and copper. I suppose their owners blamed Uncle Sam for their loss. They were not tied tight. And there are a lot of things about us that we allow to get loose when they ought to be tied up tight.

We need to gird up the loins of our church-going. Just you boys and girls take up a few holes in that girdle—won't you? We are rather loose on that. And when our habits get a little loose it's hard to do right. We need to pull up that girdle of prayer. We pray now and then, but we do not pray without ceasing as Paul tells us to do.

We get a little careless about telling the exact truth and before we can get the girdle tied up, along comes a temptation to lie, and we lie.

Some day when our loins of obedience are loosely girt, the thief called "disobedience" comes along, and before we can get them tied up tight in order to fight him, he downs us.

Remember, boys and girls, to keep "keyed up," "tuned up," "tied up."

PICKING UP THE BUOYS

Text—Heb. 5 : 14. "Their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Object—A searchlight torch, or a bull's-eye lantern.

Dear Juniors:

I am wondering if you had as good a summer vacation as I had. When I am away I am thinking of you all, and trying to get some lessons for you out of God's greatest book, greatest in size I mean, the book of nature, and the great outdoors.

Coming down the coast from a stay in Maine, the steamer had just left Rockland harbor, and I was walking the upper deck enjoying the beautiful display of northern lights that were sweeping across the heavens, when I saw a brilliant, broad ray of dazzling light shoot out from the pilot house of the steamer and move quickly and anxiously back and forth over the face of the black water. For some seconds it rested upon the water alone, but suddenly there flashed out in its path a bright steel shaft coming out of the sea. It was the buoy that marked the channel between the many rocky ledges that infest the coast of Maine. The captain had found what he was seeking with his great electric searchlight. One by one at intervals he "picked up" the buoys, as they

call it. Now it was a great tripod of wood that loomed out of the darkness, now it was a spar. In the distance we would hear a bell slowly clanging, and suddenly the great light would move out in the direction of the sound and we could see the lonely bell buoy tossing on the waves. He was picking up the buoys, getting his eye on the points of danger. But the captain knew they were there. Not once did he come too near them, even though he had not seen them. He knew they were near and he wanted to be doubly sure *just where.* And this is the sermon from the sea.

Every boy and girl moves out of the harbor of boyhood or girlhood knowing in a vague way that there are dangers ahead. If father has not told you so, mother has, and if both have neglected the warning, some tireless preacher or teacher has told you, perhaps. Like the captain, you know they are there somewhere—little sins waiting to trip you, big rocks and ledges of sin to wreck your ship. You have to steer your course carefully if you would avoid them, and it is a mighty good thing to know just where they lie. It is not enough for the fireman to know the house is afire, he must know just *where* the fire is. So he does a lot of chopping. It is not enough for the captain to know there are rocks there, but he must know just *where* they are.

Now God has buoyed the dangerous places in life, but we do not always "pick up the buoys."

Years ago the captains could not do that at night. But since electricity came into use they can. Now God has put within the pilot house of our being a powerful searchlight. We call it "the moral sense." It tells us at once where the buoys are. It says this thing is a good thing and that thing is a bad thing.

You hear people talk about "the evils of appetite," and you get to believe that there is evil in appetite. But just where that evil is you do not know until you get your seachlight working. Pretty soon it shines upon a cigarette, and it says, "Steer away, danger here."

By and by it gets to shining upon a glass of wine, and it says to you, "Danger right here—steer away."

You hear people say, "There is danger in bad reading," and one day your searchlight gets its rays on a dime novel with a red cover and it says, "Right here is bad reading—steer away."

You hear people say, "There is danger in bad companions," and one day the light falls on Tom Jones or Bill Smith, and it cries, "Steer away, this is a bad rock for you to be near."

So if we let it, the great searchlight of our moral sense will show just at what spot these dangers we have heard of lie.

We must keep that searchlight in order. In our text this morning we read of those who had their "senses exercised to discern both good and evil,"

which is only saying that they kept the reflectors clean and the current moving and the carbons renewed, in that moral sense which God gave us.

So, boys and girls, let us keep that light moving. Throw it on everything about you and learn to discern between good and evil.

Oh, how much trouble and sorrow and suffering to ourselves and to those who love us would we avoid if we were always careful first to know an evil thing when we saw it, and then were quick to steer away.

It is an awful thing to put out that light. And it may be done—so successfully that we get to calling "evil" "good," and "good" "evil"; and "light "darkness," and "darkness" "light," "safety" "danger," and "danger" "safety."

Keep your light burning, and pick up the buoys, and you will have a safe course.

ARE YOU A HOBAB?

Text—Num. 10 : 31.
Object—A large picture of the human eye.

Dear Juniors:

Are you a Hobab? "Who was he?" you ask me. Well, your question is excusable when I think of the number of people this week who have been looking at the little cards I gave you last Sunday, and know no more about him than you do. Yes, and I have had at least three ministers say to me, "Well, who was he, anyway?" But I won't "give those ministers away." To begin with he was Moses' brother-in-law, and Moses met him in the wilderness when he was leading that great army of slaves out of Egypt which he made into a great nation. You perhaps remember that Moses had married when he kept sheep in Midian, and when the family whom he had left behind in the desert when he went back into Egypt heard that he was coming as general of this great army of men, women, and children, they came out to meet him.

The time now had come to part, and Moses, knowing that God was with the children of Israel and that blessings awaited them in the land of Canaan, invited Hobab to go along and share in these blessings. "Come with us and we will do

thee good." It would have been a great thing for Hobab and his family to get out of the barren desert into fertile land. But that didn't attract Hobab. The Arab loves the desert and his home ties were very strong, and he refused to go.

So Moses tried another kind of bait to catch him. He knew that the desert before them was full of dangers and pitfalls, and that the springs were few, and the path difficult. None knew where the water and the paths were as did Hobab, the son of the desert. He could be of use to Moses, and so Moses pleaded: "Come, and do *us* good. Come, be eyes for us in the desert. Be our scout, be our guide. Lead us in the difficult path." And Hobab who couldn't be induced to leave his own home for gain to himself, went along with Moses, because he saw that he could be useful. He became eyes for them. Now I like that kind of fellow, don't you? He refused to go for his own good, but when it came to doing something for others, he went along.

Are you a Hobab? The church and the Sunday school are calling to you boys and girls on this Rally Day. "Come with us and we will do thee good." And I want to tell you that nowhere outside of home and heaven will you ever get so much good as in the church and Sunday school.

But there is a better call that they make to you to-day. "Come and do *us* good." "Come and be eyes for us." "Come and be useful." That's

a better call. "Be eyes for us." "Be the scouts of the kingdom of Jesus."

We want you all to be Hobabs to-day. I have set your trade-mark and his on the pulpit here—this great eye.

You boys and girls never know how you can lead others. The Bible says, "and a little child shall lead them." Jesus thought so when he put the little child in the midst of the disciples as an example. He also said once that God had hidden the sweetest things of all from the wise and the prudent and revealed them to babes.

I suppose you have often been eyes for old people. One day grandmother lost her spectacles and she said, "Come, dearie, be eyes for grandmother, and find my spectacles." One day mother said, "I've lost my needle down on the floor; your eyes are better than mine, my boy; find it for me." But there are better ways of being eyes. Once there was a little boy whose name was William, whose parents were not Christians and did not go to church, and they did not pray, but they wanted William to say his prayers at night. After saying them one evening, he looked up to his mother's face and asked, "Mother, don't you ever pray?" "Well—no, dearie, I am afraid I don't." "Well does papa pray?" "No, I don't think he does," said his mother. The little fellow was silent for a moment and then he said, "Mother, I think God will hear a little boy like me when he prays, but

don't you think it's kinder hard on me to have to do the prayin' for the whole family?" His mother couldn't answer that, but when the little fellow had fallen asleep, she stole over to his crib and knelt down and asked God to forgive her for not praying more. That boy was a Hobab.

There is the story of a fairy who was promised heaven if she could bring a gift most acceptable to God. She tried a drop of a hero's blood; then the smile of a maiden who had died nursing her lover; but she was refused. At last the gates opened for her, for she carried the tears of a repentant man who had been converted by the prayers of a little child.

Then you can be eyes to your fellows. You've played "follow the leader?" Well once there were some boys in a western town playing that game and they followed their leader over posts until they came to a mail-box post. But in going over they upset the box and the letters fell out. They were terribly frightened and were going to run away, when the leader said, "Let's sit down and write a letter and say we did it but didn't mean to." So they did. And the leader said, "Let's go and tell the postmaster we did it but didn't mean to." So in they walked to a surprised postmaster and the leader said, "Please, sir, we did it and we'll take what's comin'." "Did what?" said the astonished man. Then they told him. I guess you know what he said.

When he opened the box he found a letter written in a scrawly hand which said:

"Dear postmaster:

We did it, but we didn't go to do it.

Yours truly—

HENRY
BEANEY
SCOTTY
LEWIS
GEORGE."

That leader was a Hobab, and he was only ten years old.

Will you be Hobabs, who would rather serve than be served?

Will you keep your eyes on good and pure and holy things, so that you can be eyes for us all in the sandy deserts of life?

NATURE'S WREATH REMAINS

Text—Prov. 10 : 7. "The memory of the just is blessed."
Object—A wreath of paper roses.

In one of the daily papers, some days ago, there appeared this notice: "Twining about the picture of a departed one, a rosebush is still green and bearing rosebuds, although the rest of the vine is dead and withered at the home of Julius Greene. In Greene's parlor hangs the picture of a little girl, his niece, who died some years ago. This summer a rosebush in some way trailed inside the window between the two sashes, and although this kind of rosebush never does trail, but grows straight up in the air, the tendrils have reached out and, fastening on the picture, have taken their place about it as completely as if a green wreath had been placed there. While the whole bush outside has withered, the sprout which hangs about the picture is still green, and delicately colored buds shade the picture. Many have visited the home to see this phenomenon."

Now, boys and girls, I have told myself a story about that little girl. She was a sweet, loving child but was not noticed nor praised. She went out of her way daily to do loving things, but got no thanks. It hurt her sensitive little heart, and in her fits of sadness she used to go out and

tell the flowers about it. And one day she sat down beside the rosebush by the window and into the ear of the lovely flower she poured all the story of her childish sorrow. She had daily watered and tended that lovely rose, and that day as the tears fell down on the leaves of the bush like so much heavenly dew, the rosebush said—to itself of course, "Flowers are not ungrateful as people often are; she shall have her reward."

Then I saw that the little girl had become ill, and the doctor came and went into her little room. And then there was a day when she was no longer there, and the white bed was made, and empty. But they took her picture and hung it on the wall, and the rosebush saw it and pushed between the window frames, and climbed until it touched her face and made a frame of green. And then I saw it blossom. It was a glorious sight, and the room became full of people who came to see the curious thing, and they wondered and were mystified. But I did not. What I wondered at was that they in the home had not done it themselves long ago, but waited for the flowers. And then I thought that the good God who knows all we do and say had taken every kindly, patient deed of that little girl and turned it into a rose and sent the roses in through the window to adorn her face. And I wondered how many of our boys and girls are making roses which God could weave into garlands for them.

Now there is such a thing as memory. And they make wreaths of memory to hang over our lives when we are gone. But remember that we must furnish the memories out of which to make them.

Yesterday Johnnie struck his little sister. That does not go in a rose wreath, [holding up the wreath of paper roses,] does it?

To-day he helped her get ready for church and brought her here. That goes in, doesn't it?

Yesterday Mary pouted and sulked when poor tired mother asked her to hold the baby. That does not go in. But to-day she washed all the dishes so that mother could come to church with her. That goes in.

So, my dear Juniors, remember that if wreaths of roses made of memories are to hang over your lives, you must be building them to-day of kindly deeds. And remember, too, that if we do the kindly deeds, God will take care of the wreaths.

CANNED GOOD(S)

Objects—Two large fruit cans.

This, boys and girls, is an age of canning. Everything eatable that can be preserved by being protected from the action of the air is put up in cans for future use. Everything from tomatoes to plum pudding—and I put that last of course as best. Everything from oysters to "add-hot-water-and-serve"—which we don't like unless there is something else better coming.

Canning began in this country during the great Civil War when men found it necessary to put food away from the destroying germs by sealing it up in cans, so that the soldiers might carry it on long marches.

To-day there are eight hundred millions of cans of food matter put up in the United States in a single year. Think of the pile it would make if piled up in your front yard. It would take sixty thousand freight cars to pull it all away. Did you ever think that if it had not been for these innocent looking and often despised cans the North Pole would still have been standing lonesome and undiscovered? For had not the explorers been able to carry canned food they never could have made that bold dash.

All this suggested the thought, that I think

I have once heard before from some wise old man who is now probably dead, that there is something far better and more to be desired than food, that also comes put up in cans, and without which life would be poor indeed.

This something is "success." Success is a very necessary commodity and if we did not get a little bit of it now and then I think we should go under. So it is needful to preserve it by putting it up in cans. In fact, if we did not have success in cans we should never have it otherwise. Let me show you these cans in which it comes for I have brought them here for you to see. (Turn the cans round to the side on which you have written on the one "I can," and on the other "You can.") Here they are "I can" and "You can." Now all success is put up in these special cans. I do not think you can get it in any other form.

First there is this "I can." It is being able to say "I can," that brings success. "The king is the man who can," said the philosopher. The boy who believes in himself is the boy who wins. When Admiral Farragut was rebuking Du Pont for not entering Charleston Harbor he said, "You did not believe that you could."

"Possunt quia posse videntur"—they are able because they think they can. "The mind is master of the man, and so they can who think they can."

I think some of you know that little poem about

"Couldn't" and "Could" and how the one succeeded and the other did not.

"And that was the difference 'twixt 'Couldn't' and 'Could';
Each followed his own chosen plan,
And where 'Couldn't' just wouldn't 'Could' earnestly would,
And where one of them weakened the other 'made good'
And won with his watchword, '*I Can.*'"

No fellow ever succeeded who didn't think he could.

Now when we come to the matter of being Christians and confessing Jesus we are apt to feel that if we start we shall never succeed. But let me ask you to take these two cans with you and start out on your Christian journey. And remember that in this case to think of the "You can" as true of our heavenly Father, and as we go look to him in prayer and say, "Father, I can, because you can." Remember the words of the great Apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Let us all say, "What I ought to do I must do, and what I must do I can do," and then add also "what I can do by God's help I will do."

This boys, and girls, is the only road to success.

THE LESSON OF THE SUNDIAL

Object—A small metal sundial, or one made of pasteboard.

My Dear Juniors:

To-day we are to say a word concerning the measuring of that priceless commodity—time. Time in God's sight has no limits, for we know that "one day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." But man cannot live a thousand years, so he has to divide God's time up into a shorter day.

In the earliest times time was only measured by the rising and setting of the sun. "Evening was and morning was—day one" says the book of Genesis. Then men began to divide the day still more carefully and the faithful chanticleer was brought into requisition. "At evening or at midnight or at cock crowing."— But the rooster was not reliable and I imagine he often fooled them into getting to work too early, for if there is one thing we do not like it is getting to work too early.

So men began to devise means for dividing the day, and among the earliest means of so doing was the sundial, a copy of which we have with us this morning as our object lesson. As the sun shone it threw the shadow of this "gnomon", as we call

this upright plane, onto the graded scale on the disk and pointed out the hours. Then some one invented the hourglass with its two glass cones and the little hole between for the sand to run through, and our fathers and grandfathers know how as boys they used to watch the hourglass on the pulpit of the old church and wish that sand would get a "hustle on," as you boys say. But that was unsatisfactory, for some one had to come up every hour and turn the glass over, or else there had to be a lot of different glasses for different lengths of time.

King Alfred thought he had solved the difficulty with a dozen candles of different lengths, but the trouble was that sometimes the wind would blow out the candle and the time would be lost. In China, in the imperial city of Pekin there is a water clock, composed of several tubs each of which are filled from one above, and as each is filled it marks a new hour, and when the last is filled the day is complete.

But somebody has to fill the tubs every day, and has done so for over two thousand years.

At last men began to try wheels to move the hands on the dial instead of trusting to the shadow made by the sun, and at length we came to have the great tower clock of Europe, and at last the clocks with springs, and finally the little lady watches that the girls wear on their bracelets. Now if you were to choose which of these you would

prefer to measure the hours of your life, which would you take?

I suppose every one of you would say, "Why, I'll take the watch of course." And in these hurrying bustling days, when we must be on time to the second, and when men are counting the one hundredth part of a second, and worrying because there is a variation of time between the observatory at Greenwich, England, and Paris, France, of four twenty-fifths of a second, we should naturally prefer the accurate watch to the clumsy old sundial.

But do you know after all, I think that I should prefer to have the hours of my life measured by the good old clumsy sundial. Why? Because the sundial only records the sunshiny days.

The fashion of writing mottoes on sundials is quite an old and popular fashion and on some of them you may read mottoes like these: "Amid the flowers, I tell the hours", that's for a garden sundial; "The hours of justice do not strike on the dials of this world."

Near Venice there is a dial on which in Latin are the suggestive words: "*I measure only the serene hours.*"

That is why I should choose the sundial. It measures only *sunny* hours. All the dark days go by unmeasured. The sundial takes no account of them. What a nice thing to measure our life like the dial; to remember only the happy days,

the bright days, and forget to remember the dark and gloomy ones. You see if this were true we would not remember the days we had the measles, but only the day we went to the circus.

We should forget the day we had to stay at home and help mother and remember the day she put her hand on our shoulder and said, "My dear little girl is such a help to mother."

Now I think that Paul meant us to be sundials when he said to us in his letter to the Philippians, "Whatsoever things are lovely, . . . think on these things."

I want to be a sundial. Don't you?

TWO TO ONE

Text—James 1 : 19.

My Dear Juniors:

I wonder if it ever occurred to you to sit down and think out the reasons for our being put together as we are—why we have two feet instead of four and why we have two ears instead of one, and why we have two eyes instead of one great one like the giant of your fairy tales, and, more singular still, why we have two ears, and two eyes, but only one mouth.

Now, I was thinking of that the other day, and suddenly in my reading of God's word I came across an answer to this puzzling matter. It is in James's epistle, the first chapter and the nineteenth verse, "Swift to hear, slow to speak." Ah, I said that is the reason for it all. Two ears to one mouth is in order that we may be swift to hear, and slow to speak. But why should we be swift to hear and slow to speak?

Then I said to myself, we have two ears and one mouth, because hearing is more important than speaking, two to one.

Now this is so in the physical world. The teachers in the asylums and schools for the dumb will tell you that it is far easier to make a child speak if only he can hear, and that most of the

children who find it difficult to utter words with their lips are they who never heard words clearly with their ears. So that in this case at least two ears are better than a dozen mouths.

One day a teacher in one of the public schools in Philadelphia heard a noise outside her schoolroom window that sounded like some one pounding on iron with a hammer and, looking out, she saw a small boy pounding on a trolley pole with a bit of iron. She called to him to stop as he was disturbing her boys in their study, but he did not stop. For several days he kept up the racket and she got interested and went down to speak to him. She found he was almost deaf, and nearly dumb and couldn't hear all the noise he was making. She found also that this was his only amusement. So, visiting the parents and getting permission to have his ears operated upon by a surgeon, she was at last able to know that he could hear and it was not long after he became able to hear that he began to speak and to learn. So, here at least, two ears are better than many mouths. But it is always better to hear than to speak—twice as important, for we have two ears and one mouth. The Bible says that a fool is "full of words," but what are senseless words? Some boys and girls that chatter, chatter without saying anything, because they have not listened to things that were worth while, are like water being poured from jugs—the less there is in the jug the more noise it makes coming out.

Keep your ears open, and listen, so that you will have something to say, for it will take two good ears to get enough into one's head worth while to keep that one tongue of ours talking sense, and not nonsense.

Then we must not tell more than half of what we hear. For, if I am not mistaken, one mouth is half of two ears. The great trouble is we usually tell twice as much as we hear. But only about half of what we hear is true. This is a safe rule for you boys and girls to follow in the matter of those things you say about others. When we hear something about a little friend, we should do as the housewife does with sour pie-apples—peel them, and then take out the core and then cut them in quarters, and after all that add plenty of sugar. A missionary in China says she saw a cook in a Chinese kitchen smearing the mouth of the kitchen god with molasses, in order to make him tell only sweet things about the people in the house.

Out West on the big prairie farms they use a reaping machine that cuts and binds the sheaves, then threshes out the wheat and finally separates the chaff and scatters it about on the ground for fertilizing. But the trouble is that among the chaff are the seeds of weeds and when these are scattered about they sow themselves and make no end of trouble. So the farmer has had to give up that machine and burn the chaff. We hear a lot of unkind and untrue things that ought never

to be scattered about by that tongue of ours. We must burn them.

So these are the lessons that I learned from James about my two ears and single mouth: to listen twice before we speak once; and to speak out to the world, especially about others, only half of what we hear.

SALT

Text—Mark 9 : 50. "Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."

Object—Some table salt.

I wonder if we have ever been at a dinner table where the salt was accidentally spilled, when some one did not laugh and jokingly say to the spiller, "Throw a pinch over your left shoulder," or "Here's a quarrel, sure." And yet when we did it we never dreamed that we were doing very much what the Master himself did that day when his disciples were quarreling over the first place in his kingdom. He did not say, "Throw salt over your shoulder," but he did say, "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace."

Jesus was thinking of the need they had of making a covenant of peace between themselves that would stop all the strife. For salt had such wonderful preservative powers that in those olden days it came to be used as a symbol in making enduring covenants. To eat of a man's salt in Jesus' day and even in this day in the East, is to be at peace with that man.

Last summer at the Anglo-Japanese Exhibition in London I saw a most interesting and amusing set of Japanese wrestlers—great, strong fellows, with bulging muscles, who looked for all the world

like great swollen toads, and who made no end of motions and went through endless gymnastics, before they began to grip one another for the throw.

The thing that interested me most was that attached to the post of the canopy where each stood was a little basket of salt, and before they began their struggle each took a handful of this salt and sprinkled it before him, and between him and the other fellow. This the interpreter told us was to show that there was no hard feeling.

The Arabs to-day in the desert say, "There is salt between us," meaning that there is between them an everlasting covenant of peace.

God's covenant with Israel was called by them "The covenant of salt," and we may remember that King Abijam said, when men feared that the kingdom of his father Rehoboam would be taken from him, "Don't you know that Jehovah gave the kingdom to David by a covenant of salt?" —meaning that God's word was sure.

Jesus says to us young people that we are always to have salt about us, so that we may be able to throw it down when there is danger of a quarrel, and always be at peace one with another. We know how the quarrels come, don't we? First, one says some nasty thing and then the other replies. James tells us that the tongue is the trouble. Hear what Paul says, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt that ye may know how ye ought to answer one another." (Col. 4 : 6.)

I am afraid we do not carry enough of that salt around with us and throw it down like the wrestlers and the Arabs do.

Next time that Bill comes around to pick a quarrel with you, you put some salt on your tongue, and throw down some of this salt Jesus speaks of, and tell him, "There's salt between us, Bill; you and I can't scrap."

THE CHANGED CUPS

Objects—Two old-time communion goblets.

My Dear Little Churchgoers:

I am so glad that you have come to the Lord's Supper to-day, and hope that many of you will stay through the service. There is something beneath that white cloth upon the communion table that you all ought to see, and when you have seen, go home and think about it. For we are coming to-day to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Now, you know that on Communion Sunday I always tell you something of interest about Jesus' death for you, so that some day, not too far away, you will want to come as the rest of these older children do and sit at that table to celebrate his dying love.

I have here two communion goblets. Do you recollect how on the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took the "cup" and filling it gave it to his disciples as he said, "This cup is my cup, but I am going to give it to you to drink; drink ye all of it."

You will remember how that when he went out into the dismal garden of Gethsemane, he there in the shadows took another cup and drank the contents. You couldn't have seen that cup, but it was

very real to him for he said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." And so he drank it there all alone. That was our cup which he took from us. So, do you see, he gave us his and he took ours.

Now what do you think was in these two cups?

Let us look first at the cup he took from us and drank himself. (Have printed on slips of paper and placed within this cup such words as: Sin, Suffering, Sorrow, God-forsakenness, Death, and draw these out as you comment upon them.)

What a fearful cupful that was to drink! Oh, how bitter!—more bitter than any medicine you ever took. But he drained it to the dregs for you. Why? That you might be able to drink his cup which he gave you. So let us change those cups about now and see what is in the one he gave us to drink. (Take out from this cup slips on which are written: Joy, Peace, Forgiveness, Love, Fellowship with God, etc.)

Oh, what a pleasant drink, boys and girls. This is for you. "Drink ye all of it" said Jesus. Because he so loved us, he changed the cups. He took the awfully bitter one and gave us the sweet. That is what the communion means to you.

Will you take his cup? Will you let him take yours?

Some day I know you will come to sit down with

us all here, and drink the symbol of his blood. But to-day you can take the cup of blessing he gives you, and if you trust him he will take all the bitterness out of your young lives and leave only the sweet.

Won't you love him? Of course you will. I knew it.

CHRIST'S SENTINEL

Text—Matt. 26 : 40.
Object—Any picture or image of a soldier at "attention."

My Dear Soldiers of Jesus:

I am wondering to-day how many of you have ever been very lonesome. Perhaps some of you were sent out to uncle's last summer, on the farm, or had to stay at home while mother and father were away in Europe. How solemn it got about evening, when the sun went down, and the crickets chirped and the katydids sang in the tree just outside your bedroom, and you wanted mother to come in and kiss you good-night, and a great big lump came up in your throat and wouldn't go down until you had let some tears come out of your eyes, and you felt that you had not a friend left in the whole great round world. It is a mean feeling, isn't it?

Now, our master Jesus was a lonesome man. He had only a very few faithful friends, and these finally left him on that awful night when he was struggling with the thought of death in Gethsemane. For you remember how he took Peter and James and John and went deep into the shadows of the garden, and asked them to watch and wait for him while he went ahead a little farther and prayed for strength—Peter and James and John,

the faithful three that he thought he could trust above all the rest. But when he came back from his lonely vigil he found them fast asleep. And you will remember how he looked at them sadly, and with that lonesome feeling in his great loving heart said, "*Could ye not watch with me one hour?*" Think of it, young soldiers of the King. They could not keep sentry for him even one short hour.

That is the trouble that the Master finds with us young soldiers, we cannot keep watch with him one hour. We are so impatient and we get so tired watching with Jesus.

What does watching with him mean to-day? He does not ask us to go and sit in a garden and wait for him. I think it means this—playing sentinel over the duties he gives us.

First.—Attending the church service each Sunday morning, is watching with him just one hour, for that is the length of the service. I know how hard it is to sit still for an hour, no matter how interesting the performance or the service. I remember how they used to offer me ten cents if I would sit still five minutes when I was a boy. And I am going to let you into my secret and tell you that I didn't get that ten cents.

But when you know that it pleases the Master to have you here in his house keeping watch with him, that makes it easier.

Second.—Sitting for another hour on Sunday

afternoon in the Sunday school studying that great bock which we call "The Word of God," is again playing sentinel for the Master, for that book is the guidebook, full of instructions for the Christian soldier, and he will never be a good soldier until he knows what the rules of the service are.

Third.—Kneeling down to pray each night and morning is like keeping watch with Jesus in the garden. The kind of watches Jesus kept were just like that. He went out night after night alone either on the mountain or in the garden to pray. The old hymn says:

> "Put on the gospel armor
> And watching unto prayer."

It's the "watching unto prayer" that we young Christians need, and some can't even watch five minutes in each day.

Fourth.—Keeping the Sabbath day is watching with Christ, taking care that that one day in the seven should be reserved for him, guarding it as carefully as the sentinel guards the sleeping hours of his master, letting no person or thing come in to mar the holiness of that day of rest which Jesus left us.

Fifth.—We know that the sentinel gives himself up to his duty entirely during the time that he is watching. And so ought we to give ourselves up to Christ, standing at attention, giving heed to him as long as we are on duty. Now it takes love

and devotion to watch faithfully. And because Jesus knew that, he asked only those whom he thought loved him to do this.

When I was in Edinburgh, in Scotland, this summer I saw the statue of a little terrier dog on the top of a drinking fountain for animals. He was called "Greyfriars Bobby," and he was a sentinel worth while. When he was a young dog he used to come to town with his master, a farmer who sold his produce in the Grassmarket near the old Greyfriars Church, and when his master went to dinner Bobby would go along and get his share at the little tavern near by. But one sad day that master died, and was buried in the cemetery of the Greyfriars Church. Poor Bobby was inconsolable. He followed the coffin of his master to the cemetery and when they laid it away in the grave, Bobby lay down on top of that grave and refused to move. When it came dinner time and the great factory whistles told it was noon, Bobby got up as usual and went for his dinner, which they gladly gave him and then went back and lay down to watch on his master's grave. He never left it except during the noon hour. For twelve years poor Bobby kept his watch over his master, and when he died they buried him in that master's grave.

Boys and girls, if a little terrier dog could be so faithful to his dead master, how faithful do you think we ought to be to our living and risen Master when he asks us to watch with him one hour?

WHAT JESUS SEES IN US

Text—Matt. 6:28, 29.

Object—Some pressed flowers from Palestine; or any field flower.

My Dear Juniors:

I have in my hand this morning as our object lesson one of the many beautiful varieties of flowers that grow in the land of Palestine, which in the early spring, when its hills and plains are covered with a carpet of beautiful colors, looks like a great Persian rug, and causes the travelers to go into ecstacies of delight.

Perhaps no land in the world has a greater variety of flowers than the land where Jesus lived, and this little flower is but one of the three thousand varieties of gorgeously colored beauties that Jesus saw each morning as he wandered about in the spring time in his native land. Perhaps this little flower called the "anemone," grew on the very spot where Jesus' feet had trod, or perhaps blossomed on that hillside where he made the five thousand sit down when he fed them with loaves and fishes.

"We grew upon the very hills
Where Jesus used to stand,
We blossomed on the lonely paths
Of God's once holy land."

Nothing is more beautiful to the eye than the great carpets of anemones all scarlet in color like the one we have to-day, or the great fields of poppies, and clovers, and yellow crocuses, and blue irises and red and yellow tulips.

Jesus loved the flowers, as he loved all that God had made, and in our text he uses them as an object lesson to his disciples on the necessity of simply doing our part and glorifying God by growing, but the thing about them that first attracted him was their beauty—"they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Now flowers are mentioned many times in the Bible, but the singular thing is that they are always spoken of as a symbol of the frailty and brief measure of the life of men.

David loved flowers, but the thing that impressed him was the thing he wrote about them in the Psalms, "For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Job saw on the flowers a picture of his own short life when he said: "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down."

Isaiah said, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," and when we come to the New Testament we find that they did not treat the flowers any better. James tells us that the riches of the rich

man are like the flowers; it shall soon pass away. And Peter says, "For all flesh is as grass . . . the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."

But Jesus saw differently. He did not notice the frailty so much as he looked at the beauty of the flowers, and the possibilities they had in them. He called attention to their great beauty, saying that Solomon, the great king, in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these, and he told of their power to grow.

Now as I look about me and see all you boys and girls, I am reminded of a flower garden, and how differently men think of you from the way that Jesus thinks of you. You boys and girls are the flowers of humanity. We "grown-ups" are apt to look at your weakness and frailty, but Jesus is looking at your beauty and possibility.

We are apt to think what a weak and frail thing a little child is, and Jesus is always thinking what a beautiful and wonderful thing a child is.

But Jesus had a habit of looking at the beautiful side of everything. He never would have seen the worm hole in the autumn leaf; he would have seen only the glory of its colors. There is a story told of Jesus that one day as he and his disciples passed by a dead dog at the road side the disciples spoke slightingly of it, but Jesus said, "Yes, but see what beautiful teeth he has."

I think if Jesus should come in bodily form into

our midst to-day, and look about among you boys and girls he would say, not what men might say, "What frail things children are," but, "What beautiful things children are, and what wonderful possibilities they have." And if we should ask him for a picture of true beauty, he would pick up one of these little ones in his tender arms as of old and say, "This is your picture."

Sometimes I fear mother or father will get angry with you and call you "bad," and "good-for-nothing," or men may push you carelessly aside because you seem so helpless and frail. But Jesus always thinks you beautiful, and besides he sees that you have a wonderful chance for the future. He knows you *can grow* like the lilies. As the acorn contains the mighty oak tree, so Jesus knows you boys and girls each hold within you a great and noble life.

Now if Jesus is looking at us for beauty, let us never disappoint him. And if he is expecting that we shall grow gradually and naturally like the lily into great beauty, let us not fail him.

THE EMPTY SEATS

Text—1 Sam. 20 : 18.
Objects—Some small doll chairs.

My Dear Young Churchgoers:

I have brought with me to-day the pastor's bugbears. No, they are not behind the pulpit they are before you here. And though they do not growl and look furry, they do go on all fours. They do not bite, but they have the power of inflicting a sorry wound. But I must not keep you youngsters guessing longer. A bugbear is a terrible bear, for the old English word bug means fear, and a bugbear is a thing that in the bad old days they used to scare little toddlers with when they would not go to bed. A bugbear means a monstrous dread. And do you know that it is not only little boys and girls that have such bugbears that creep out of the shadows at bedtime and meet one on the dark stairway when the lamp is turned down dim, but that pastors of churches have bugbears? These are some of them which I have before me—yes, these little chairs. For they often wound me to the heart. And the thing that makes them a special terror to pastors is that they are empty.

Now look at the text a moment—"Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty." David was absent from the king's table and Jona-

than told him that he would be missed because his seat at the king's table would be empty. Boys and girls, when you are absent from the service of God's house you will always be missed because your seat will be empty.

Now, you say, "If that is all for which I am missed, simply to fill a seat, then I had better stay away." But there are other things for which we miss you when that chair of yours is empty. We miss the bright face that adds so much to the joy of God's house. We miss the sweet young voice that adds so much to the praises of the sanctuary. But you are chiefly conspicuous because that seat where you belong is lonesome and sad and makes us all feel lonesome and sad.

Remember that a seat belongs to each member of this Junior Congregation and if you are not there to fill it, *your* seat at least will be empty. Do you realize what a sadness is in the home life wherever there is a vacant chair? It may be grandfather's chair at the head of the table that is vacant, or it may be the baby's little high-chair at the other end, but the vacant chair makes a heart wound in mother's or father's heart. And just so the vacant chair in God's house wounds not only the heart of the pastor, but the great loving heart of God who seeks those who will worship him. Can't you realize how grieved our Saviour would be should he come into this room and find *your* seat empty?

Then remember that you will be missed as an inspiration to your pastor, for he is woefully afraid of these innocent looking bugbears of empty chairs. When he gets up to speak and looks into the faces of his dear young churchgoers, he feels a great throbbing joy and it helps his message for that day, but when he looks into the faces of these bugbears, he is woefully afraid, and he loses all courage and his sermon is often spoiled.

You will be missed as an inspiration and example to the members of the Senior Congregation, for when they see you in your places they will feel the power of the example you have set.

Now why do we want you here as boys and girls?

Some time ago I saw a great rosy red apple growing in a bottle whose neck was so small that one could just get the thumb within it.

What was the secret? Why, the farmer had taken the bottle and tied it to the bough in the early spring and had inserted the blossom within the glass prison, and as the apple grew it grew within the vial until it filled it. It is very difficult to get the "grown-ups" to come into God's house. But it is so much easier to grow up in his sanctuary when, like Samuel, you begin as a little child.

WHO'S AFRAID?

Text—Ps. 27 : 1. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"

Object—A heathen charm or fetish.

I wonder if there is a member of this Junior Congregation here who ever heard this little poem:

"Once there was a little boy
Who wouldn't say his prayers,
And one night when he went to bed
Away up stairs,
His papa heard him holler,
And his mama heard him bawl,
And when they turned the covers down,
He wasn't there at all.

. . . . .

And all they ever found of him
Was his little roundabout;
And the goberlins 'll git yer,
If yer don't watch out."

When you were little tots, and had to be put to bed by your nurse, did she ever scare the life out of you by telling you a lot of horrid lies about some sort of "Bugaboo" that was hiding in the closet or behind the shadow of the wardrobe, or under the bed, that would "get you" if you did not mind and go to sleep right away. And you didn't believe it at all, though somehow you were just as glad she left the light burning when she went downstairs. *But suppose you had believed it!* Suppose you really and truly imagined that the "goberlins"

would get you if you did not look out, and that there was a real "Bugaboo" in the closet that would do terrible things to little boys and girls! Life would not be worth living to be in such constant fear. And yet, boys and girls, there are millions of poor little tots all over this great big world that do believe it.

Suppose whenever you wanted to go in swimming, you had to tie a wisp of grass about your wrist so that the river spirits would not catch you and duck you under for so long that you never could get your breath again.

Suppose you couldn't go out after sunset for fear the evil spirits of the woods, that only come out at night, would run off with you and keep you prisoner for life in the forests.

Suppose father had to have the trouble and expense of moving your house every little while because the evil spirits came around and claimed the land, and made such a fuss that you had to move on.

Suppose some bright morning you should start out for school with your books and your luncheon, and an evil spirit should get right in the way, and you had at once to turn about and retrace your steps toward home. Possibly you might like that as it would seem like a holiday. But you would have to go to bed at once on reaching home, stay there for several hours, and then start out all over again.

Suppose you were sick, and getting better, and some one came into the home and said, "How is Willie to-day?" Mother might be glad her boy was recovering, but she must be careful not to say so; because if she did the spirits might think she was rejoicing over them; for you must know it is the spirits that make people sick in heathen lands. So she would say to the neighbor, "Thank you very much for asking, but Willie is—*more so and so.*"

Suppose your mother covered your face with mud, girls, so that the evil spirit would not want such a dirty, homely girl as you would seem with the mud upon you, and so would leave you to your mother instead of stealing you.

This is the condition of millions of little boys and girls in the heathen lands.

I have here this morning a "fetish," as it is called, used in Korea to drive away evil spirits. Miss Doriss, our missionary at Fusan, found it hanging on a tree and sent it to me. It is just a piece of colored rag that means little to us, but to them it means protection from the evil spirits whom they fear so greatly.

If you should hang this on your front gate, so they tell us, you would be safe; for spirits, in Korea at least, cannot climb a fence.

Now if all this were true of you, and you believed that the goblins and all kinds of evil spirits might make you much trouble and keep you in constant

fear, you would want some one to come and relieve you. That night when you saw that bear creeping out from under the couch across the room, you were glad to have mother come up and assure you that it was nothing but the rug, and turn up the gas to show you. And these poor little boys and girls are so glad when some one goes to Korea and turns up the gas for them and shows them the light.

Every one of us to-day in the Christian land can say if we will, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" But the boys and girls of Korea do not yet know that.

Will you go and tell them that there are no such things as these evil spirits, but that the only spirit we have to do with is the Holy Spirit of God who loves us? I wonder if any of us will go and tell these little ones that "God is their light and salvation."

Many boys and girls have decided on their life work when they were children. James Chalmers, the great missionary to the South Seas, settled the question as a boy of twelve in a Scotch Sunday school. Mr. Mackie, the superintendent, read from a letter of one of the missionaries in the South Seas and then he leaned down and said, "I wonder if there is a boy here this afternoon that will become a missionary," and little Jimmie Chalmers said, "I will."

One day Bishop Coleridge Patteson was playing about his home, when good Bishop Selwyn the

missionary put his hand on the boy's head and said to his mother. "Won't you give me Coley, for the South Seas?" And "Coley" never forgot, and went to the South Seas.

So, my Juniors, it may be that even to-day some one of you will make up your minds to go out some day and tell those other Juniors across the seas that as "The Lord is their light and salvation," they need not be afraid. Will you?

UNAPPRECIATED CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Text—Luke 6 : 35. "Do good, . . . hoping for nothing again."

Object—An umbrella.

My Dear Christmas Shoppers:

Do you think that a queer title by which to call you? But you are. I have seen many of you shopping with mother in the city this week getting ready for that happy moment when you could play Santa to father or mother, or brother and sister. No, I am not going out in the rain, and I really do not need this umbrella in the pulpit for they say that it is always dry in a pulpit. But that is not true, is it?

I brought this umbrella to suggest to you a story. An uncle of mine, when he was a little fellow like you, was given an umbrella for Christmas and in the early dawn by the dim light of a winter's morning, he was seen coming down the stairs to his mother's room rubbing his eyes with one tiny hand and lugging the umbrella with the other, and saying with great disgust as he came, "Who ga' me this amberellar?"

There is a thought comes to me just now that there may be many of the gifts of Christmas that like this "amberellar" will go unappreciated. Some

of them will not be cared for because of some fault in the spirit of the giver.

First, because they will be given without love. There are sure to be misfits when we leave out love in the making of the gift. When you go to the post office to mail your gift at Christmas time, you carefully weigh the package to find the cost. I wonder if you weigh the package to see how much real love is in it. Some time ago in a Sunday-school convention a little German got up and said, "Vat ve vant in dis gonvention is more of dat leetle vord of tree letters l-u-v." And if that doesn't spell love what does? Yes, we need love to make the gift appreciated. Cyrus the Great gave to his courtier Artabazus a golden cup, but to his favorite Chrysanthis a kiss, and Artabazus complained that the kiss was worth more than the cup.

> "Not what we give, but what we share,
> For the gift without the giver is bare."

Again, these gifts are so often given in the spirit of exchange. How many times do you say, "She gave me only a box of candy last year, and I'm not going to spend much on her this year." Some one says we cut up our Christmas trees and make bargain counters of them.

"Do good," says Jesus, "hoping for nothing again."

These Christmas gifts are not valued sometimes because there is a wrong spirit in the heart of the

receiver, and that wrong spirit shows itself when we think more of the gift than we do of the giver. The boy who did not like the "amberellar," as he called it, had in mind the gift he wanted more than the love of the father who gave it.

And this wrong spirit makes us expect too much. To have your heart too greatly set on any earthly desire is to be disappointed. We are so set on getting some one thing that we forget to be grateful for the thing we do get. Oh, if we could get the spirit of little Piccola across the seas. Her family was very poor, so she set out her little shoe, hardly daring to expect the good Santa Claus to come her way. But when she went to it eagerly in the morning, there in the shoe sat a tiny birdie, cold and wet and hungry. Tenderly she took the little fledgling in and nourished it, crying out with joy, "How good Piccola must have been for God to have given her this."

And then that bad spirit makes us more concerned with receiving than giving. When we think more of getting than giving, we shall ever be unthankful, and many a good gift will go unthanked by us, boys and girls. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." I trust that no good gifts of God at this Christmas tide will go unliked by you because of this evil spirit of discontent and want of love both in giver and receiver.

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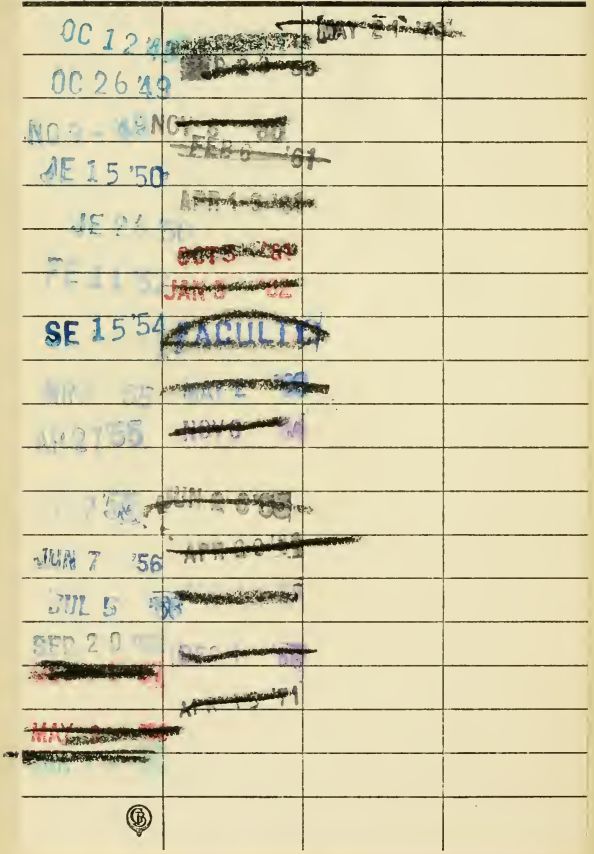

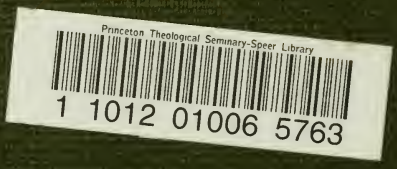
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